Enabling complexity thinking in urban regeneration in Cape Town

by

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Declaration

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Abstract

Apartheid policies of racial segregation have left a daunting legacy in South Africa – a fragmented urban form with unequal access to jobs, amenities and public services. Since the advent of democracy, planning systems have not been pro-poor or inclusive; instead, they have often imposed an instrumental and technical rationality inherited from the old colonial system, with little consideration to the survival strategies and power contests of the urban poor.

Mainstream consensus-based theories, such as communicative and deliberative planning, with their focus on participation, mutual learning and shared vision, also fail to recognise the reality of contestation over power and resources that characterise cities in the Global South. As a result, citizen participation in the context of state-society collaboration is often absent or unsuccessful. For this reason, urban scholars from the Global South are calling for the need to build a more practical and usable theory that is rooted in the realities of their cities.

This thesis attempts to provide one such empirical account by profiling the implementation of the City of Cape Town-led Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP) in Bonteheuwel, Cape Town, over the 2017 – 2019 period. The specific objectives of the research are 1) to demonstrate how Bonteheuwel can be understood as a complex adaptive system; 2) to apply the 'conflicting rationalities' lens to the study of planning interventions in the Global South, such as the MURP in Bonteheuwel; and, 3) to explore the characteristics of a complexity-based governance approach to urban regeneration in the Global South.

I have used case study design to guide the research for this thesis because, its focus on agents and structures in a particular context, makes it ideal to explore the reality of planning practice in a city in the Global South. A combination of secondary information, participant observation and a total of 14 interviews were used as sources of data.

The research found that applying the lens of complexity to the description of planning settings, such as Bonteheuwel, offers new opportunities to understand the diverse logics, multiple trajectories and possible futures that exist. By recognising the characteristics of complex-adaptive systems (CAS), which are prevalent in our societies, planners are better equipped to begin to engage in processes of governance and transformation.

The case has also surfaced, how state logics of govern and improve assume an instrumental rationality that has little touch with the reality on the ground: a web of messy micropolitics, power and space contestations that are often encouraged by the state's history of unfulfilled promises and under delivery. The research, therefore, endorses the validity and relevance of the conflicting rationalities concept and illustrates the existence of normative and power struggles within state and society.

Based on complexity theory, adaptive management emerges as a new ontology and epistemology to govern the realities of chaos, non-linearity and unpredictability of complex adaptive systems, such as Bonteheuwel. The learnings brought about by the case study point, however, to additional gaps in the literature, which should be prioritised to advance planning theory and practice in cities in the Global South.

Opsomming

Die apartheidsbeleide van rasse-segregasie het vir ’n ingewikkelde nalatenskap in Suid-Afrika gesorg – ’n gefragmenteerde stedelike vorm met ongelyke toegang tot werksgeleenthede, geriewe en openbare dienste. Sedert die aanbreek van die demokrasie is beplanningstelsels nóg pro-armes nóg inklusief; in stede daarvan is daar met die stelsels dikwels ’n instrumentele en tegniese rasionaliteit afgedwing, wat by die ou koloniale stelsel geërf is en min oorweging aan die oorlewingstrategieë en magsverset van die stedelike armes skenk.

Hoofstroom-konsensusgebaseerde teorieë, soos kommunikatiewe en beraadslagende beplanning gemik op deelname, wedersydse leer en gedeelde visie, erken ook nie die realiteit van verset oor mag en hulpbronne wat stede in die globale Suide kenmerk nie. Gevolglik is deelname deur landsburgers in die konteks van die staat-samelewing-medewerking dikwels afwesig of onsuksesvol. Om hierdie rede wys stedelike vakkundiges uit die globale Suide op die behoefte om ’n meer praktiese en bruikbare teorie daar te stel wat op die realiteite van hul stede gegrond is.

Hierdie tesis voorsien een sodanige empiriese weergawe, deur ’n profielsamestelling van die implementering van die burgemeestersgeleide stedelike vernuwingsprogram van die Stad Kaapstad (MURP) in Bonteheuwel, Kaapstad, oor die tydperk 2017 tot 2019. Die spesifieke doelstellings van die navorsing is 1) om te demonstreer hoe Bonteheuwel as ’n komplekse adaptiewe stelsel verstaan kan word; 2) om die ‘botsende rasionaliteite’-lens op die studie van beplanningsintervensies in die globale Suide, waaronder die MURP in Bonteheuwel, te rig; en 3) om die kenmerke van ’n kompleksiteit-gebaseerde beheer-en-bestuur-benadering tot stedelike vernuwing in die globale Suide te ondersoek.

Ek gebruik ’n gevallestudie-ontwerp om die navorsing vir hierdie tesis te rig, aangesien die fokus daarvan op agente en strukture in ’n bepaalde konteks dit ideaal maak om die realiteit van beplanningspraktyke in ’n stad in die globale Suide te ondersoek. ’n Kombinasie van sekondêre inligting, deelnemerwaarneming en altesaam 14 onderhoude word as databronne gebruik.

Die navorsing bevind dat deur die lens van kompleksiteit op die beskrywing van beplanningsituasies soos Bonteheuwel te rig, nuwe geleenthede bied om die bestaande uiteenlopende logika, veelvuldige navorsingstrajekte en moontlike

uitkomstes te bekom. Wanneer beplanners die kenmerke van ’n komplekse adaptiewe stelsel (CAS) wat in ons samelewings voorkom, kan uitken, is hulle beter toegerus om by beheer-en-bestuur- en transformasieprosesse betrokke te raak.

Die kwessie het ook aan die lig gekom dat die regeringslogika van beheer-en-bestuur en verbetering ’n instrumentele rasionaliteit veronderstel wat weinig raakpunte het wat betref die realiteit op voetsoolvlak: ’n web van morsige mikropolitiese, mags- en ruimtelike verset wat dikwels deur die staat se geskiedenis van onvervulde beloftes en onvoldoende lewering aangemoedig word. Die navorsing onderskryf gevolglik die geldigheid en relevansie van die botsende rasionaliteitsbegrip en illustreer die bestaan van normatiewe en magstrydvoering binne die staat en die samelewing.

Gegrond op die kompleksiteitsteorie kom adaptiewe bestuur as ’n nuwe ontologie en epistemologie na vore vir die beheer-en-bestuur van die realiteite van chaos, nie-lineariteit en die onvoorspelbaarheid van komplekse adaptiewe stelsels soos Bonteheuwel. Die insigte wat met die gevallestudie bekom word, dui egter op bykomende leemtes in die literatuur, wat geprioritiseer moet word om beplanningsteorie en -praktyk in stede in die globale Suide aan te moedig.

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List of Acronyms

ABA	Area Based Approach
ACT	Area Coordinating Teams
BEPP	Built Environment Performance Plan
CAP	Community Action Plan
CAS	Complex Adaptive Systems
CBD	Central Business District
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CoCT	City of Cape Town
CRS	Cape Renewal Strategy
DSD	Department of Social Development
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ICDG	Integrated City Development Grant
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IUDF	Integrated Urban Development Framework
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German Development Bank)
MSDF	Municipal Spatial Development Framework
MURP	Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme
NDPG	Neighbourhood Development Programme Grant
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRF	National Research Foundation
NURP	National Urban Renewal Programme
ODTP	Organisational Development and Transformation Plan
PgD	Postgraduate Diploma
PIF	Public Investment Framework
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
UDF	Urban Development Framework
UNS	Urban Networks Strategy
URP	Urban Renewal Programme
VPUU	Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading

Chapter 1: Background

1.1 Introduction: addressing apartheid legacy through urban regeneration

Twenty-five years after the advent of democracy the majority of South Africans have not yet experienced a noticeable change in their living conditions. This is despite the roll-out of major government-led infrastructure and social service programmes, which have gathered considerable international recognition (*An Incomplete Transition. Overcoming the Legacy of Exclusion in South Africa*, 2018). The pernicious combination of high unemployment, which particularly affects the youth[1]; persistent poverty[2] and dangerously high inequality levels[3] are very concerning and often described as "a ticking bomb"[4]. Despite the implementation of ambitious poverty reduction strategies in education, health and housing across the country, the post-apartheid government has faced considerable challenges to redress spatial and economic apartheid. Competing visions for rural and urban areas, low institutional capacity of newly formed municipalities tasked with service delivery, and the poor coordination of disparate policies and priorities between departmental silos and spheres of government, are some of the key challenges that explain the slow progress achieved towards spatial equity and broad-based human development (Todes & Turok, 2018).

The consequences of poverty, unemployment and inequality are most visible in South African cities plagued with the scourge of crime and violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and family and community disintegration. Rapid rates of urbanisation and the pervasive spatial legacy of apartheid have been major barriers for improving the lives of urban dwellers in the country (*An Incomplete Transition. Overcoming the Legacy of Exclusion in South Africa*, 2018; Turok, 2012; Watson, 2009). This legacy is most palpable in the Cape Town Metropolitan region, home to approximately 4,2 million people (*City of Cape Town. Socio-economic profile*, 2016).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the apartheid government put in place "a distinctive form of racially segregated urban development", which regarded the members of the black

[1] According to a recent report by the World Bank (2018: 7): "only about 60 percent of working-age South Africans participate in the labour force, and unemployment is high (27 percent), especially among young people (over 50 percent)

[2] "While Poverty was roughly halved between 1996 and 2008, 55,5% of South Africans could meet their food requirements but not afford other necessities" (*An Incomplete Transition. Overcoming the Legacy of Exclusion in South Africa*, 2018: 26)

[3] "South Africa had a Gini coefficient of 0.63 in 2015, one of the highest in the world and an increase since 1994" (*Overcoming Poverty and Inequality in South Africa. An Assessment of Drivers, Constraints and Opportunities*, 2018: 70)

[4] To view one such example https://www.huffingtonpost.co.za/jahni-de-villiers/south-africas-unemployment-figures-are-a-ticking-time-bomb_a_23436867/

majority as cheap migrant labour and relegated them to the periphery of urban centres (Turok, 2012: 6). This was achieved through the systematic forced removal of the black and coloured[5] population in a process that has left significant scars in the psyche of black South Africans. The spatial legacy of apartheid is one of divisive, unproductive and dysfunctional cities (*Built Environment Performance Plan (BEPP), 2018/2019*, 2018). In the City of Cape Town, over 126, 000 families were forced to abandon their homes and businesses and move to the Cape flats area (Ghirardo, n.d.).

Since the advent of democracy, cities and their fragmented urban landscapes and people have been a central focus of both national and local policies that seek to redress the legacies of the past. Urban policy papers, such as "the National Development Plan, the Spatial Planning & Land Use Management Act and more recently the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) all place the imperative for spatial transformation of our cities at the forefront of more inclusive economic growth in South Africa" (*Built Environment Performance Plan (BEPP) 2018/2019*, 2018). As stated in Cape Town's BEPP report (2018/19), "metropolitan municipalities have the responsibility to guide spatial development through urban planning instruments, infrastructure investments and service delivery programmes that shape the built environment of South African cities". One of the components of metropolitan planning strategy and urban management is the targeting of specific areas according to their potential to catalyse development or the need for regeneration considering urban change and decay.

The Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP) of the City of Cape Town falls within the latter category as a precinct- or area-based urban management programme. As explained by Alistair Graham, Head of Technical Support at MURP, the programme is aimed at "uplifting former neglected & dysfunctional areas, such as CBDs, Town Centres, Community Nodes and Commercial Corridors which are regressing rapidly, by stabilizing the area, by improving safety, quality of life and the socio-economic situation within the shared public environment by introducing a sustainable system of operations and maintenance of public infrastructure & facilities in partnership with communities, while providing a platform for effective public and private investment" (Graham, n.d.). This thesis focuses on Bonteheuwel, one of the nine target areas of the MURP within the Cape Town Metropole.

[5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloureds

1.2 Research problem

Apartheid policies of racial segregation have left a daunting legacy in South Africa – a fragmented urban form with unequal access to jobs, amenities and public services. Since the advent of democracy, planning systems have not been pro-poor or inclusive; instead, they have often imposed an instrumental and technical rationality inherited from the old colonial system, with little consideration to the survival strategies and power contests of the urban poor. This has perpetuated division and poverty in South African cities.

In addition, mainstream consensus-based theories, such as communicative and deliberative planning, with their focus on participation, mutual learning and shared vision, fail to recognise the reality of contestation over power and resources that characterise cities in the Global South. As a result, citizen participation in the context of state-society collaboration is often absent or unsuccessful.

Emerging southern urbanists are, therefore, calling for the need to root planning theory and practice in the realities of their cities, specifically using case studies to build a more practical and usable theory, which is currently lacking (Harrison, 2006; Harrison & Todes, 2001; de Satgé & Watson, 2018; Todes, n.d.). This thesis attempts to provide one such empirical account by profiling the implementation of the MURP in Bonteheuwel over the 2017 – 2019 period.

1.3 Rationale for the study

Planning scholars from the Global South have long criticized the absence of documented planning theories and practices rooted in the reality of the cities in the Global South. One such example is the concept of ‘conflicting rationalities’ coined by Watson in 2003, which challenges the appropriateness of the dominant collaborative rationality paradigm in relation to the realities of African cities. The concept is however, ‘under construction’ and requires that urban scholars continue to stress-test and expand on it (de Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Similarly, complexity theory has permeated many academic and professional disciplines, including urban planning (Nel, 2009; Rogers, Luton, Biggs, Biggs, Blignaut, Choles, Palmer & Tangwe, 2013; de Roo, Gert; Hillier, 2016; Wagenaar, 2007a). Yet, despite the promise that complexity may offer useful insights into understanding and responding to the challenges of modern cities, its application to the Global South appears under explored. Searches on the NiPAD and National Research Foundation (NRF) databases yielded no results that linked urban planning to complexity theory. The key words used in my searches were “*complexity

theory* AND *planning*". These databases contain information from Africa and South Africa respectively, and the results further illustrate the research gaps indicated by my literature review.

Given the research gap in Africa-centred studies on complexity and planning, this thesis attempts to advance the study of this field. The research has studied the process used for the implementation of the MURP programme in Bonteheuwel during the 2017-2019 period, by applying the lens of complexity theory and the 'conflicting rationalities' concept, in order to provide a pragmatic account of planning practice in a city of the Global South. The focus of analysis of relevant factors and trends has been the community of Bonteheuwel, on the one hand, and the municipal team responsible for implementing the MURP, on the other.

My motivation to undertake my masters in sustainable development and planning is to improve my knowledge of planning theory and practice in South Africa, especially in Cape Town, where I am based. Because my professional background is in planning, monitoring and evaluation of socio-economic development programmes, I am interested in how such programmes intersect with the spatial dimension embedded in planning; indeed, 'spatial planning' has been defined as the "geographic expression to the economic, social, cultural and ecological policies of society" (Council of Europe, 2003 in Parker & Doak, 2012). The specific topic was appealing because of being a real-world, 'live' case and, after meeting with members of the MURP management team, they expressed interest in supporting such a research process with the view to benefit from the research outcomes.

1.4 Research objectives

The overarching objective of this thesis is to contribute to the body of planning theory and practice rooted in the reality of a city in the Global South, such as Cape Town.

Specifically, the study addresses the following research sub-objectives:

1) To demonstrate how Bonteheuwel can be understood as a complex adaptive system;
2) To apply the 'conflicting rationalities' lens to the study of planning interventions in the Global South, such as the MURP in Bonteheuwel;
3) To explore the characteristics of a complexity-based governance approach to urban regeneration in the Global South.

1.5 Scope of the study

The goal of this study was not to assess the outcomes of the MURP in Bonteheuwel in terms of the project's intended objectives in the areas of public infrastructure, and social and economic development, but rather to assess the *process of implementation* of the project in the period 2017 – 2019 against the complexity and 'conflicting rationalities' frameworks. Understandably, the project's timeline is much longer than what can be accommodated in this thesis research.

While the focus of the research is on the current implementation of the City of Cape Town-led MURP project in Bonteheuwel, the literature review has explored links to 1) other government-led planning programmes aimed at urban regeneration in South Africa; and 2) past history and socio-economic development of Bonteheuwel, as a case study. Deep contextual understanding is a critical premise of my theoretical framework and research design (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Watson, 2002).

Lastly, the scope of my research will inevitably have been influenced by my own personal biases as a researcher and a non-South African.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is structured in five chapters. Chapter 1 serves an introduction to the document; after briefly laying out the socio-political context relevant to the study, the chapter discusses the research problem, rationale for the study, research objectives and scope.

Chapter 2 includes the literature review that provides the theoretical framework to this study. After an introduction, sections 2.2 and 2.3 present two current trends in planning theory, namely, deliberative planning as the global mainstream paradigm and the 'conflicting rationalities' concept, which emerges as a counter theory to suit the specific urban contexts in the Global South. Sections 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 discuss complexity theory and its application to planning and governance.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to explaining the methodology selected for the research, namely, case study research. Five sub-sections describe the research design, sample, methods, data collection and analysis as well as a discussion of the limitations of the research.

Chapter 4 complements the previous chapter on methodology by presenting the MURP and Bonteheuwel as the specific project and context subject for the research.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the research in five sections: section 5.2 provides a personal account of the researcher's experience in conducting the research; section 5.3

provides an analysis of the degree to which Bonteheuwel is a complex-adaptive system; sections 5.4 and 5.5 apply the conflicting rationalities concept to the study of the MURP Bonteheuwel 2017 – 2019 iteration; and section 5.6 concludes the chapter with a summary of research findings.

Chapter 6 is dedicated to conclusions and implications of the research findings to the theory and practice of urban regeneration in the Global South. The last part of the section makes some recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

While communicative and deliberative planning theories are prevalent around the world, southern urbanists have been contesting their applicability to the realities of poverty, inequality and spatial contestation typical of cities in the Global South. With the aim of advancing our understanding of urban systems in such contexts, I have selected two theories, which are now presented in this chapter: on the one hand, the concept of 'conflicting rationalities' to capture the often-irreconcilable differences between state and community positions in the context of planning interventions; on the other hand, complexity science with its emphasis on contextuality and the relational and adaptive nature of complex adaptive systems (CAS), such as cities.

After a brief discussion of the main propositions brought forward by deliberative and communicative planning theories, section 2.3 introduces the concept of conflicting rationalities, and sections 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 introduce complexity theory and its application to planning and governance.

2.2 Planning theory in the 21st century: Deliberative and participatory planning

A key milestone in the evolution of planning theory is the shift from instrumental and technical rationality to a communicative and deliberative understanding of planning (Harrison, 2006). Instrumental rationality in planning is characterised by a static view of the world and a reductionist approach to its analysis and understanding, which must be led by 'the expert' who can deploy specialised knowledge (Huys & van Gils, 2010). In contrast to instrumental rationality, the prevalent consensus-based planning theory promulgated by scholars such as Healy (1997), Forester (1999) and Innes & Booher (1999, 2016) stem from the premise that "all planning knowledge is socially constructed" (Grunau & Schoenwandt, 2010) and therefore planning tasks cannot be confined to the ambit of the expert. Grunau & Schoenwandt (2010) argue that planners are not exempt from this phenomenon and their role cannot be perceived as purely technical, because it inevitably brings with it the subjectivity of the observer. According to this theory, our knowledge of the world is influenced by our perceptions and experiences, which explains why planning processes invoke a variety of responses, positive and negative, from the various actors involved.

Proponents of deliberative theories apply Habermas' communicative rationality theory (Habermas, J.; McCarthy, T.; McCarthy, 1984) to planning and demand an inclusionary and participatory approach, where all relevant stakeholders are given an opportunity to engage with the planning process, express their views and, if the conditions are appropriate, contribute to mutual learning and empowerment (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002; Innes & Booher, 1999, 2016). These authors argue that "active participation of citizens in public decision-making creates opportunities for personal development" (Wagenaar, 2007b: 29). Instead, modes of governance where a "high-handed, technocratic style of policy-making" prevails, leads to citizens feeling disenfranchised with regards to the management of their collective problems (Wagenaar, 2007b: 23). The expectation is that, if successful, deliberative planning processes would lead, in the words of Held (1996) in Wagenaar (2007: 21), "to create a local 'participatory society': a society which fosters a sense of political efficacy, nurtures a concern for collective problems and contributes to the formation of a knowledgeable citizenry capable of taking a sustained interest in the governing process". With this view, the journey of participants during the planning process is as important as the result.

Although urban scholars (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002; Harrison, 2006; Watson, 2002) generally recognise that deliberative and communicative planning theory represents an advancement from the "idea of planning as the product of autonomous reasoning processes of the expert, to a relational notion of planning" (Harrison, 2006: 2), collaborative planning has been extensively criticized on several accounts (ensuring pluralism as a logistical impossibility; limitations of verbal knowledge and communication; contradictions in logic: need for local community participation but guided by the coordination of a central authority to avoid 'disparate agendas'). Grunau & Schoenwandt (2010) add that deliberative rationality theories have failed to explicitly explain which topics or methods are needed to successfully carry out planning and governance tasks and how these relate to each other. Wagenaar (2007: 30) concurs by pointing out that "successful discursive citizen participation in an environment of state-society collaboration is far from self-evident".

Challenging the premise of consensus building as the beginning and end of planning interventions, the 'conflicting rationalities' theory is calling for more contextually appropriate planning theories to the complex dynamics and contestations of cities in the Global South. The next section will review the key proposals of this emerging theory.

2.3 Planning theory from the Global South: a world of 'conflicting rationalities'

Most of the documented planning theory and practice available to planning practitioners around the world has been developed in the 'Global North' guided by the Western liberal model of democracy as a desirable normative project (de Satgé & Watson, 2018). This, in the context of rapid rates of urbanisation worldwide particularly in the Global South, presents a challenge for planning as a discipline: to come up with theory and practice that is attuned with the dynamics of urbanisation in contexts characterised by poverty, inequality, poor infrastructure, unstable social and political conditions, and weak public institutions. An emerging group of urban scholars are challenging the universal application of Western liberal democracy to all geographies and contexts (Watson, 2014a); instead, they claim the importance of understanding the social, cultural, economic and political context where planning is to take place. These scholars argue that "cities in Africa, and the Global South more generally, are littered with failed imported planning efforts (British Garden Cities or rigid and mono-functional zoning schemes and regulations) based on erroneous assumptions about household survival strategies, levels of car ownership and movement patterns, attitudes to land, institutional capacities or socio-cultural decision-making processes" (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 15) that are not borne out of a close analysis and understanding of real patterns and motivating factors (Todes, 2008).

One such southern theorising project is the concept of 'conflicting rationalities' coined by Watson (2003), which refers to the divergence of values and opinions between state and community positions in cities in the Global South. In her view, it is such "deep and irreconcilable differences" that often drive planning processes into spirals of ongoing conflict, which planners are not equipped to deal with (de Satgé & Watson, 2018). The concept draws from the work of the anthropology professor, Tania Murray Li (2007), who studied the effects of urban planning on informal communities in Indonesia, specifically "the ability to assemble and catalogue the rationalities imbricated in the wills to 'govern and improve', to record the ways in which these encounter wills to 'survive and thrive', and the capacity to understand social and institutional complexity and intricate networks, relations and oscillations of power" (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 8). In other words, "'place' matters for planning and development projects", as argued by de Satgé & Watson (2018: 8). A key implication of this theory for planning is the need to understand contexts in depth to maximise the chances of success of an intervention. The importance of place has methodological implications for researchers and practitioners building planning theory from the South: case studies offer opportunities for critical deep contextual analysis (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Watson, 2002) and are seen as valuable

tools to build theory that is embedded in practice. The concept of 'conflicting rationalities' emerged through such a process: Watson's 2003 article focused on the analysis and interpretation of a report of a Commission of Enquiry set up by the Cape Town municipality to investigate a government-led informal settlement upgrading project, which was rejected by the targeted community and gave rise to intense protests. Building on the observations and propositions made in that article, in 2018, Watson and De Satgé collaborated in the development of the N2 Gateway megaproject case study in Langa, Cape Town, which, through intense primary data collection and in-depth analysis, served to begin to cement their theoretical proposition.

The conflicting rationalities concept opposes the current consensus of the widespread applicability of communicative planning. According to Harrison (2006), the concept emphasises the limitations of collaborative planning in the context of deep social divides and fundamental inequalities in power, similarly defended by authors such as Foley and Lauria (2000) and Fainstein (2002). Watson (2003) affirms that, in the context of African cities and other cities in the Global South, there is little hope for all stakeholders in planning process to become empowered, to act autonomously and in an informed way. The conflicting rationalities concept urges actors involved in planning and development in the Global South to recognise the existence of conflict, difference and contending claims on space and place (Charlton, 2009; Massey, 2013; de Satgé & Watson, 2018). The N2 Gateway case study, referred to above, dissects the opposing logics of the South African developmental state and the urban poor. The 'govern and improve' mentality of the state is unpacked to expose contradictions and inconsistencies between policy and practice as well as power battles across the different spheres of government involved in design and delivery. The case study also provides a rich account of the complex dynamics that fuel the 'will to survive and thrive' of the urban poor in order to secure political and material gains: rural-urban linkages brought about by internal migration; informality as the poor's shield against exclusion from market-led development; and the tendency towards clientelism as a common form in which marginalised groups engage (Watson, 2014b) .

A critical theoretical proposition emanating from the N2 Gateway case study is that states in the Global South stubbornly approach community engagement based on "homogenising exhortations of 'community', which are blind to power and ill-equipped to deal with conflict" (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 234). Consensus-based planning approaches are deployed in the search for 'win-win' solutions that are presumed to flow from engagement, communication and mutual learning. Instead, authors such as Charlton, 2009; Massey, 2013; de Satgé & Watson, 2018 suggest planners in the Global South must assume the existence of conflict within

communities resulting from fluid power dynamics and contestations over space and resources. This requires the planner to prioritise in-depth understanding through historical investigation; in other words, “proposed development interventions should engage as much with the past in order to better understand the present and imagine the future” (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 228). This approach aspires to identify the potential trade-offs of development interventions with a view towards “pragmatic deal-making” (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 228).

Because of its nascent nature, de Satgé & Watson (2018) refer to the concept of conflicting rationalities as a ‘theorising project in planning’ and admit that the concept may present more questions than answers. In its initial formulation, applying a conflicting rationality approach demands a new ontology and epistemology in the field of planning, one that acknowledges the need to theorise from place and context; one that attempts to “understand the ‘contingent universals’ of any situation: what is specific to a place and what can be shared learning across different localities and contexts” (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 23).

The concept of conflicting rationalities provides a useful lens to improve our understanding of critical factors influencing planning interventions in Global South contexts, such as the MURP project in Bonteheuwel. The next section provides an overview of complexity theory and some of the key concepts and theories that have served as lens for the study of the MURP project in Bonteheuwel.

2.4 Complexity theory as a new paradigm

The world is more interdependent and complex than ever. Economic globalisation, regional and global migration, technological innovation and instant information exchange by governments, corporations, social movements and individual citizens across the globe have enabled an unprecedented degree of connectivity and interdependence in all spheres of our lives. Quoting Heylighen, Cilliers & Gershenson (2007: 117) state, “the result is an ever more complex ‘system of systems’ where a change in any component may affect virtually any other component and that, in a mostly unpredictable manner”. For most, the rate and scale of planetary degradation is an example of such an unpredictable and unintended consequence.

The magnitude of the challenges ahead has influenced the emergence of a new form of science, known as complex systems thinking, which characterises a specific way of thinking that acknowledges the inter-linked nature of reality. Wells (2013: 35) argues that “many of the global crises in recent years – mass extinctions, climate change, social injustice, poverty, natural resource depletion, toxic pollution, etc. – have existed in a large part because our thinking has been more focused on single issues and disciplinary parts rather than on synthetic

analysis about the interactions and processes of whole systems". This new science has emerged to fill the gap left by the traditional scientific method, which is proven unable to deal with what Swilling & Annecke (2012) have defined as a collective global 'polycrisis'; an 'unprecedented labyrinth of complexity' in the words of Mebratu (1998).

Until the start of the 20th century, the Newtonian or positivist worldview has prevailed in the Western world as the means for understanding and studying reality. This paradigm advocates for the dissection of an object into its most simple parts, which will be analysed in the hope that, then, the meaning of the entire object will be unveiled. The underlying assumption behind this approach is that what matters is in effect the amalgamation of its most simple parts; that each part can play a predetermined number of limited functions and that any matter will therefore perform as expected according to the context in which it is placed. This analysis was applied to all material and non-material reality.

From this simple premise, we can draw several assumptions on which the understanding and study of reality is based. Morin in Wells (2013) summarises these assumptions to a set of three, namely: universal determinism, reductionism and disjunction. Universal determinism dictates that the future can be predicted, and the past can be reconstructed; thanks to reductionism, we know that the characteristics of a whole will be no different to the summation of the characteristics of its individual parts; and, lastly, under disjunction we acknowledge that it is necessary and sufficient to use individual and separate cognitive abilities for the study of systems.

While analytical thinking that is preoccupied with structure in search for an objective truth may apply to certain physical and natural science disciplines, it is likely to fall short to understand the social and human world. Morin in Wells (2013) eloquently alludes to the limitations of the Newtonian worldview: "the extraordinary success of classical science led to the strange ideology whereby the relative stability and laws of the physical realm were falsely imputed to living and social systems, obfuscating central qualities of the social – such as the power of subjectivity, ideas, and the ability for radical changes in ideas, attitudes, worldviews, behaviours, and social systems".

Challenging the Newtonian-reductionist science paradigm, complexity theories have arguably become the preferred approach to study and understand socio-ecological systems (SES) as "dynamic interactions by multiple elements engaged in self-organising processes" (Wells, 2012: 20). The world is by and large no longer understood as "clockwork that can be ordered, predicted and controlled"; instead "social-ecological systems (SES) are complex, discontinuous, non-linear and unpredictable, integrating human and natural phenomena

across multiple spatial scales and timeframes" (Goldstein, Wessels, Lejano & Butler, 2015: 1286).

Commonly defined as "the undefinable" or "that which we cannot grasp or fully model" (Wells, 2013: 35), the complexity paradigm introduces a new ontology and epistemology, whereby the observation of a system as a network of interlinked elements will provide the most useful understanding of a given system. Wells (2013: 17) defines complex adaptive systems (CAS) as "dynamic interactions of multiple elements engaged in self-organising processes". This definition places the focus on the relational nature of the elements of a system and their ability to produce internal order and logic.

While the origins of complexity thinking can be traced back to the 1960s with the work of von Bertalanffy and her formulation of first organising principles of living systems, "there is no unified 'theory of complexity'" (Preiser, Biggs, de Vos & Folke, 2018: 2). Instead, the concepts and ideas that inform theories of complexity have been applied to a wide range of disciplines. One such application is the definition of all linked human and ecological systems as complex adaptive systems (Preiser *et al.*, 2018).

Several authors (Cilliers, 2000; Manson, 2001; Preiser *et al.*, 2018; Wells, 2012) have attempted to provide a taxonomy to further our understanding and guide our engagement with complex adaptive systems. The following is a list of key characteristics of CAS adapted from (Preiser *et al.*, 2018):

1. **Heterogeneity and relationality**: The relationships between the elements of a system - or 'agents' in the words of Heylighen *et al.* (2007) - form the unit of analysis of CAS. Agents within a CAS perform a number of functions, often contradictory; for this reason, it is not possible to say that elements or agents within a CAS have a unified purpose (Manson, 2001). Heylighen *et al.* (2007: 125) go further and affirm that CAS agents are "intrinsically egocentric or selfish" and tend to act on the basis of short-term return, ignoring the long-term effects of their actions.
2. **High connectivity:** Components or agents of a CAS constantly interact with each other in a network of relationships of different nature and strength. Elements or agents with especially tight connections may form sub-systems within a CAS, and any component can belong to multiple sub-systems (Manson, 2001).
3. **Contextuality and openness:** A CAS is highly dependent on the environment in which it operates; the boundaries between a CAS and its environment are often permeable and agents within the system often change their role or function to adapt to the changing context (Chu *et al.,* 2003 in Preiser *et al.*, 2018).

4. **Dynamism and evolution:** The dynamic interactions that constitute a CAS reinforce a pattern of constant evolution and change. A key characteristic of this dynamism is the system's capacity for self-organisation and co-evolution, which allows it to better interact with its environment (Preiser *et al.*, 2018).
5. **Adaptability and capacity to learn:** In the words of Manson (2001: 6), "a complex system can deal with truly novel situations". This is because system agents have the capacity to read and send feedback to each other and their environment; this allows them to adapt their functions to accommodate new relationships with new agents or a changing environment (Rosen, 1991; Günther and Folke, 1993; Morin, 1999; Levin, 2005; Fox Keller, 2008 in Preiser *et al.*, 2018).
6. **Non-linear or emergent causality** alerts to a CAS capacity to give rise to qualities or properties, which cannot be traced back to the attributes of any of its internal components. Those properties often manifest in the form of complex, unintended changes with disproportionately small or large effects on other parts or the system as a whole (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984; Holling, 2001; Levin et al., 2013 in Preiser *et al.*, 2018).

Complexity thinking has permeated several disciplines, planning and urban theory being some of them. Specifically, applying the lens of complexity to the predominant deliberative planning theories brings new lessons for planning practice.

2.5 Complexity and planning

Even though the field of complexity applied to urban systems seems to be nascent, urban scholars have begun to explore how cities exhibit patterns of complex adaptive systems (Portugali, 1997 on Self-organizing Cities; Innes & Booher, 1999 on Consensus Building and Complex Adaptive Systems). Rooney (2003) in Nel (2009: 5) critically assessed past city development approaches from a complexity perspective: "our attempts to change behaviour have been based on a model of directing (or coercing) people by legislation or exhorting people to change without giving them the requisite information or techniques, nor engaging them in developing a shared intent that was congruent with their values and beliefs". In short, we tended to operate from a mechanical model of the world rather than recognising that we are dealing with a complex living adaptive system. Insights from complexity science led to an alternative view of social sciences. Under a complexity lens, urban complexity thinkers often place the emphasis on the relational qualities of urban systems and their ability to produce internal order and logic. The functions played by the parts of a system as well as the relationships that the parts establish with one another are at the core of the inquiry.

When studying complex adaptive systems in a planning context, Huys & van Gils (2010: 144) stress the need to understand the *dynamic* and *adaptive* behaviour of a system. As previously discussed, CAS is characterised by non-linear dynamic interactions between the agents within the system as well as the system's relations to its environment. In essence, a clear cause and effect relationship cannot be drawn; instead fluctuations and influences coming from the environment encourage the system to adapt. Co-evolution in this context means "that actors evolve through each other (in an iterative and reinforcing way)" (Byrne, 2003; Walby, 2004; and Urry, 2005 in Huys & van Gils, 2010: 144). All authors argue that there is no strict hierarchy of actors, levels and processes and, as a consequence, interactions can flow in every direction regardless of the position of power or level of resources of a particular agent. In other words, "all actors can influence the system and should be taken seriously" (Huys & van Gils, 2010). The behaviour of individual agents within the system is highly inter-dependant, which means that, when making a decision, actors may be guided by intuition (the expected, intended and unintended response of other actors and/or the environment) more than reason (current resources, positioning and limitations) (Huys & van Gils, 2010). The density of interactions within a CAS make its behaviour highly unpredictable and full of possibilities.

Unpredictability does not mean CAS are, by definition, unstable, according to Wagenaar (2007: 25): "it has been demonstrated that when certain initial conditions have been met, complex systems, both physical and social, tend toward a state of dynamic equilibrium and might even display a certain robustness". This would explain why "a decayed neighbourhood can be quite stable in its anomic state, unable to get out of it by itself. Or, conversely, many neighbourhoods exhibit a typical 'character', despite rapid turnover among its residents" (Wagenaar, 2007b: 25). Nor does unpredictability mean that change in a CAS occurs randomly; Wagenaar (2007) argues that CAS actors use mental models, visions and projections to anticipate the future.

Complexity cannot be controlled but it can be understood and harnessed. Therefore, the understanding of urban systems and planning processes as complex-adaptive systems demand a new role and approach by the planner. Traditionally, planners are taught to focus on the construction of shared visions, "attainable goals as well as quick and neat solutions" (Grunau & Schoenwandt, 2010: 49). Most authors, however, call for a *realist perspective* of planning processes and mechanisms of co-evolution at work: for Grunau & Schoenwandt (2010: 48) this means that planners must start by acknowledging and defining societies' 'big messes', namely, those "situations that have the potential to cause conflict or that are deficient in some way".

According to authors such as Huys & van Gils (2010); Innes & Booher (1999); & Wagenaar (2007), communicative rationality draws from complexity theory in the understanding of planning settings as complex adaptive systems, where individual agents can self-organise, learn, adapt and change in response to information and feedback from the environment. The concept of 'emergence' is seen as the "hallmark of complex adaptive systems" (Innes & Booher, 1999: 7), where consensus becomes the desirable emergent property of a planning process. Wagenaar (2007) argues that deliberative democracy increases *system diversity* and *system interaction*; Huys & van Gils (2010) talk about increasing information exchange within the system as an essential process to increase system *intelligence*. In order to capture the density and diversity of CAS interactions, and reap the benefits of it, planning theorists argue that the system must be well connected: it's about identifying actors who have an interest in or are affected by the planning process, and those who have existing interdependent relationships and are aware of the necessity to share information with others (Huys & van Gils, 2010). Similarly, from a governance perspective, Duit and Galaz (2008) emphasise the need to develop the problem-solving capacity of governance systems.

Despite their popularity, "complex adaptive systems-based approaches do not provide magic bullet type solutions for solving intractable real-world problems. Instead, such approaches offer more integrated frameworks and process-based modes of engagement for understanding why these problems may be difficult (or sometimes impossible) to solve, which in turn can inform practical strategies for governing more resilient socio-ecological systems" (Preiser, 2018: 3). Suitable approaches for the governance of complex adaptive systems have been the focus of much research and debate (Duit & Galaz, 2008; Folke, Hahn, Olsson & Norberg, 2005; Preiser & Woermann, 2019; Strand, 2007). Most authors agree that the nature and extent of interaction, integration and interdependency of today's world requires "institutions to be able to navigate processes of adaptation and surprise", which they may be ill-prepared to confront (Preiser & Woermann, 2019: 2). The next section will discuss what complexity-based governance approaches should look like according to the literature.

2.6 Complexity and governance

Folke *et al.* (2005: 4) loosely define governance as the "institutions and processes by which people in societies make decisions to share power". This process is inevitably filled with normative aspects and power considerations. In the face of global ecological damage, persisting poverty and increasing inequality, the study of governance from a complexity perspective has become centre stage. A social and ecological CAS, such as a city or a community, is viewed as a diverse set of institutions, which enable a multiplicity of behaviours

and interactions between actors guided by a variety of values. Governance from a complexity perspective demands changes in the way decisions are made and actions are implemented, but also in the way decision-making power is shared. This new form of governance has been defined as adaptive governance and adaptive co-management.

Because CAS are characterised by the intensity and frequency of interaction of its multiple agents, adaptive governance requires the engagement and integration of agents, viewpoints and institutions; this is called the "diversity hypothesis", which assumes that organisational and institutional diversity is the most effective way to cope with complexity" (Preiser & Woermann, 2019: 11). This proposition sits in stark contrast with the traditional notion of expert knowledge, which is primarily aimed at the understanding (and alleged control) of the separate parts of the system (e.g. immigrant communities, taxi operators, school dropouts, employers, etc.), and which threatens to miss the emergent properties of the system entirely. Similarly, Biggs, Rhode, Archibald, Kunene & Mutanga (2015: 5) argue that "any CAS actor only has a partial understanding of the system", and, therefore, it is necessary to engage and integrate different perspectives. This realisation has two major implications for governing complexity: on the one hand, it begs for the redefinition of the role of the 'expert', who moves from being an objective and detached specialist to becoming one of many viewpoints in the deliberations (Folke *et al.*, 2005); on the other hand, there is a widespread call for 'other forms of knowledge' such as technical, ecological, ethical knowledge, etc. to be included in decision-making processes so as to have a better understanding of the system and its anticipatory capacities (Folke *et al.*, 2005; Preiser & Woermann, 2019). In the context of urban planning and governance processes, authors such as Wagenaar (2007) and Strand (2007) reclaim the role of the ordinary citizen by arguing that "the stories of 'street-level experts speak to the worries, interests, values and aspirations of the actor", which provide critical insight into the nature of interactions in a given context (Wagenaar, 2007b: 26).

Duit & Galaz's (2008) conceptualisation of adaptive governance provides a useful framework to initiate the exploration of complexity-based governance approaches. They described the adaptive capacity of governance systems as the function of two features: *exploration* and *exploitation*. *Exploration* is the capacity to experiment, innovate and learn, which is innate to CAS and must therefore be harnessed through a conducive environment and steered towards a desired trajectory. *Exploitation,* on the other hand, refers to the "stability-inducing role of institutions" (Duit & Galaz, 2008: 9), which allows for the deepening and widening of the benefits of experimentation through collective action and collaboration. In their study of several forms of governance around the world, Duit & Galaz (2008) conclude that governance systems need to balance these two functions: governance systems need to be stable enough to allow

for the accumulation of resources and social capital, whilst at the same time be able to deal with change.

Experimentation is also at the core of the understanding of this new form of governance by authors such as Folke *et al.* (2005), Biggs *et al.* (2015) and Preiser & Woermann (2019): within the adaptive management framework, policies become hypotheses based on our understanding of the nature of CAS, and management actions become tests to refute or confirm those hypotheses. This framework encourages a "learning by doing" approach to policy formulation and implementation (Biggs *et al.*, 2015). This approach demands a new attitude by those interested in governing CAS: one of reflexivity and self-criticism that makes no claim for objectivity (Preiser & Woermann, 2019; Strand, 2007). Instead, our approach should be aimed at "improving comprehension" (Wells, 2012: 21) of agent functions and relationships and managing for emergence (Preiser, 2018). In so doing, predictive approaches based on comprehensive analysis and modelling would be discarded in favour of anticipatory approaches that recognise the likelihood of unintended consequences when dealing with socio-ecological systems.

To maximise the opportunities of success, ongoing monitoring and comparative analysis of different actions are critical to ensure learning and improvement. Because CAS are inherently dynamic and constantly evolving in reaction to internal and external stimuli, "understanding CAS is at least partly a moving target, and managing SES requires continual learning and adaptation of management strategies" (Biggs *et al.*, 2015: 1).

Decentralisation and devolution of power are similarly at the core of adaptive governance. Complex adaptive systems are deeply contextual even when embedded within larger systems. CAS agents constantly interact and self-organise because of information that is locally available about the behaviour of other agents and the system as a whole. CAS display signs of dispersed interaction with no central organising principle and therefore are better suited to respond to adaptive management practices that foster the self-organisation of local groups embedded in multi-level governance systems (Preiser & Woermann, 2019).

Much has been written about the critical role that trust and social capital play in enabling self-organisation and collaboration in human societies. "Trust makes social life predictable, it creates a sense of community, and it makes it easier for people to work together" (Biggs *et al.*, 2015; Esau, 2008; Shannon, 1990 in Folke *et al.*, 2005). Complexity theory concurs by warning that "devolution of power only works when there's social capital and social networks" (Folke *et al.*, 2005: 11) and demands that adaptive governance leaders invest in nurturing relationships and building trust, all of which are at the core of collective action. This is no easy

task and it requires skilful facilitation by bridging organisations between local actors, communities and organisations at vertical and horizontal scales of the collaboration spectrum (Biggs *et al.*, 2015; Folke *et al.*, 2005).

From the literature review, I postulate that the conflicting rationalities concept intersects with complexity theory on several elements; this will be exemplified by the Bonteheuwel MURP case study findings and discussed in the Conclusions section.

Having reviewed the theoretical framework in which the research is embedded, the next chapter describes the methodology used to carry out the research of the selected case study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Since the advent of democracy in South Africa, planning systems have largely ignored the realities of the urban poor; their strategies for struggle and survival remain largely unknown for planning scholars. This thesis aims to contribute to the emerging body of southern planning theory that is rooted in the study of planning praxis and its interaction with the realities of the urban poor. The methodology draws on two specific theories to inform the case study design and empirical engagement: the concept of 'conflicting rationalities' to capture the often-irreconcilable differences between state and community positions in the context of planning interventions, and complexity science with its emphasis on contextuality and the relational and adaptive nature of complex adaptive systems, such as cities.

3.2 Research design

Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, Santos, Toit, Masenge, Aardt & Wagner (2014) define research design as the "framework for the collection and analysis of data". I have used case study design to guide the research for this thesis because its focus on agents and structures in a particular context makes it ideal to explore the reality of planning practice in a city in the Global South. One of the distinctive characteristics of case study research is that it concerns itself with the study of an 'individual unit' in its specific conceptual, temporal and spatial dimensions (Duminy, Andreasen, Lerise, Odendaal & Watson, 2014). According to Duminy *et al.* (2014), what occurs within those boundaries determines what the case study is about and what lies beyond the case boundary is the context for the case. The value of a case study is to document the details of events as they actually unfold in a given setting, and how this happens. Often the *how* questions naturally lead the researcher to explore explanatory questions of *why* certain planning events had the observed outcomes.

This methodology is also particularly well suited to the theoretical framework selected for the research: on the one hand, the study of complexity urges researchers to recognise the boundaries of the system under study and the implications of boundary setting on the research findings. On the other hand, the conflicting rationalities lens demands deep contextual understanding of the dynamics at play in planning scenarios, with special emphasis on foregrounding the existence of contending claims on space and place prevalent in the Global South. Its proponents, Watson and De Stage, use the case study of an N2 housing project in Langa, Cape Town as a methodology for "southern theorising". One of the criticisms levelled at case study research (which in part applies to qualitative research in general) is its

questioned ability to generate conclusions that can be generalised to multiple cases. Arguably, the 'primacy of context' of this research design makes it more difficult for conclusions to be universally applicable; however, authors have shown its validity to produce theoretical propositions (Duminy *et al.*, 2014; *Guidelines for Case Study Research and Teaching*, n.d.); others suggest the scrutiny should be placed not on whether the findings can be generalised, but on how well the researcher generates theory out of the findings (Bryman *et al.*, 2014: 113). Duminy *et al.* (2014) have an even more intriguing proposition to make on the value of case study research: by providing detail and experience, developing expectations and guiding action, the case study approach "offers a sounder basis for learning than do abstract rules and theories" (Watson, 2002 in Duminy *et al.*, 2014: 39). Duminy *et al.* (2014: 39) conclude that "making a case study generalisable is about ensuring that it is 'relatable' and 'transferable' to enable a process of experience-based learning". The case study of MURP in Bonteheuwel was selected because I believe that it can serve as an instrumental case study option, as defined by Stake, 1995 in Bryman *et al.* (2014) and allow for the understanding of planning from a complexity perspective in the immediate context of urban regeneration projects in the City of Cape Town. It was also selected for being a typical or representative case of MURP implementation based on the *convenience* of the case timeline (it was running at the time that the research was conceptualised), logistics (accessible and close to the researcher's location in Cape Town) and the willingness of the project team to cooperate.

3.3 Sample

Three types of stakeholder groups were selected for this study, namely:

- Bonteheuwel MURP implementation team, including local government officials and collaborators;
- Bonteheuwel residents who had been elected onto the MURP Project Steering Committee for the 2017 – 2019 programme iteration;
- Key informants from the community and provincial government, who were not directly involved with the Bonteheuwel MURP.

A total of 14 interviews were conducted: 5 members of the MURP implementation team and 1 local government official; 3 Bonteheuwel residents and MURP PSC representatives; 5 key informants (2 Bonteheuwel residents; 1 NGO officer working in Bonteheuwel; 1 provincial government official; 1 local council member).

The following is some background information on research participants to better contextualise and interpret research findings:

- As part of the interviews with CoCT representatives (5 MURP implementation team members and 1 local government official), 5 men and 1 woman were interviewed. Five respondents had been employed by the CoCT for a period ranging between 2 years and over 15 years. The additional MURP team member was a retired business professor, who had been brought on board in a pro-bono capacity.
- Four females and one male residents of Bonteheuwel were interviewed. Three respondents were employed, one was self-employed, and one was unemployed. One was employed as project manager for an international NGO; one was a secretary at a local civic structure; another one was a secretary at a private medical practice. Four out of the five had a family history of forced removal and forced relocation to Bonteheuwel during apartheid. The four females currently live in Bonteheuwel with their families; the male respondent moved out of Bonteheuwel but continues to run his business from the community.
- One female and one male were interviewed; one of them because of her insight into local and provincial planning policy and practice; the other one, because of his practical experience in working with Bonteheuwel on human right issues.

The Bonteheuwel MURP implementation team was purposive sampled. The rest of the interviews followed a combination of convenience and snow-ball sampling. Efforts were made to seek out diverse viewpoints and perspectives to make the case study more valid and convincing, hence the interviews with key informants not directly involved in MURP implementation. Some difficulties were faced in using a variety of methods for collecting additional data from more stakeholders; these limitations are discussed in section 3.6.

3.4 Research methods

The nature of the research objectives and theoretical framework guiding this thesis called for the collection of several types of data to which the research methods had to be fit for purpose.

To conduct the literature review, secondary information was accessed from a variety of sources, including reading material from relevant Sustainable Development PgD modules (i.e. Complexity Theory, Introduction to Planning and Sustainable Cities); academic books from the Stellenbosch University Library; and searches on Google Scholar, Scopus and JSTOR. Searched terms included the following and a variation thereof:

- “planning” and “complexity”
- “city” and “complexity”
- “planning” and “South Africa”

- “complexity” and “urban governance”
- “collaborative planning” and “Africa”
- “community development” and “complexity”

To produce the Bonteheuwel MURP case study, both primary and secondary information were used. On the one hand, contextual information on the MURP and aligned government policies and programmes was reviewed; in addition, the researcher used participant observation and interviews with a variety of stakeholders to produce a detailed account of the implementation of the programme in Bonteheuwel over the period under study. A third category of data was sought through interviews: this constituted the values, experiences, perceptions and expectations of respondents. This type of data can be categorised in what Bateson (2017) calls ‘warm data’, specifically developed to improve our understanding of complex systems. *Warm data* describes the relational interdependencies present in CAS and foregrounds “the necessary contradictions, binds (double-binds and more), and inconsistencies that occur in interrelational processes over time” (Bateson, 2017). The researcher found that face-to-face individual interviews guided by semi-structured guidelines were best placed to elicit critical information on existing relational patterns.

In line with that approach, customised interview guidelines were developed for all three stakeholder groups listed in the previous section and, where necessary, adapted during the interview process. All instruments contained an average of 12 open-ended questions aimed at exploring, from the experience and perspective of the interviewee, selected themes in depth. Instruments included questions on the MURP process, context, results and challenges of implementation as well as a few questions that, drawing from the Appreciative Inquiry[6] approach, were aimed at encouraging interviewees to reflect on positive futures based on the current strengths of the system in which they were based (i.e. Bonteheuwel, MURP and local government, etc.).

The researcher observed three MURP workshops, two internal meetings of government officials, and one participatory workshop with Bonteheuwel community representatives. The purpose of participating in the meetings was to observe activity in real time, paying special attention to decision-making processes, resolutions, consensus-seeking behaviour and conflict, as well as subtle observations of language, intonation and body language. Interview guidelines were reviewed and approved by thesis supervisors, Stellenbosch University Ethics

[6] ‘Appreciative inquiry’ is a methodology in organisational change management, which attempts to use ways of asking questions and envisioning the future in order to foster positive relationships and build on the present potential of a given person, organisation or situation.

Committee and the Director of Organisational Policy and Planning at the City of Cape Town. Interview schedules can be found in the Appendix.

3.5 Data collection and analysis

Following case study research guidelines (Duminy *et al.*, 2014), the objective of the data collection process was to collect as many facts as possible about the process of implementation of the MURP in Bonteheuwel in order to produce a detailed account of events as they unfolded. *Warm data* in the form of values, experiences, perceptions and interdependencies of case study protagonists within their contexts were also captured.

The collection of data happened concurrently and in an iterative manner. Secondary information on MURP and planning policies and programmes was received from the MURP implementation team as well as sourced from the Internet. Interviews were solicited via email as well as scheduled telephonically after offering an introduction to the purpose of the research. Respondents were visited at previously agreed locations (usually places of work or homes) and informed written consent was obtained in all instances. Interviews were conducted in English, they were recorded and together with the notes taken by the researcher, they were transcribed into electronic documents. They were conducted between 9 May and 2 July 2019 in Cape Town. A journal with observations, impressions and reflections was also kept.

Open access qualitative data analysis software, QCAmap, was used to analyse research data based on categories and codes that linked directly to the research objectives. The literature review was brought into the analysis of primary data in order to generate theoretical explanations at a higher level of abstraction. The analysis and interpretation of collected data against the literature was used as a form of triangulation of the findings.

Research findings and conclusions were structured along key research objectives: section 5.3 of Chapter 5 provides a characterisation of the case study site, Bonteheuwel, from the lens of complexity; by applying the CAS taxonomy to the description of the case study community, primary and secondary data are used to test the degree to which the community can be considered a CAS and therefore aligns to the taxonomy as covered in the literature. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 provides an account of the implementation of the MURP in Bonteheuwel during the 2017-2019 iteration through the lens of the ‘conflicting rationalities’ framework. Following the structure used by de Satgé & Watson (2018) in Urban Planning in the Global South, the MURP case study is presented as ‘a tale of two parties’: section 5.4 draws on the narratives from the different government officials and technical MURP team members to showcase the logic of the state to ‘govern and improve’; section 5.5 weaves in the voices of community

members and other social actors that represent the 'will to survive and thrive'. Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the different themes to extract critical conclusions for planning theory and practice in the Global South around the application of complexity theory and conflicting rationalities frameworks to urban regeneration.

I intend to present the results of the research to key stakeholders in Bonteheuwel as well as to the MURP team, likely by preparing an abridged report of results and recommendations.

As part of this methodology chapter, I have elected to include a brief experiential account of the research process from the perspective of the researcher. It is hoped that this discussion will contextualise some of the limitations identified in this research as well as enrich the case study by capturing some of the learnings emanating from the research process. This is particularly important when studying complex adaptive systems where, in altering existing relationships among agents and establishing new ones, the researcher is seen as a participating member of the system rather than an objective observer (Biggs *et al.*, 2015; Preiser *et al.*, 2018; Rogers *et al.*, 2013).

3.6 Researching the MURP: Experience and lessons learned

The possibility of using a real-live urban planning programme run by municipal government as a case study to my master's thesis was an exciting one. My expectation was to contribute to an improved understanding of Bonteheuwel, the MURP and how complexity theory can improve outcomes for urban regeneration efforts in Cape Town and other cities in the Global South. However, researching a CAS meant that the process was not necessarily linear, nor mechanically effective or efficient; instead, it required openness and flexibility to be able to find value and opportunity in the unexpected and reconfigure the research strategy to suit the changing dynamics on the ground.

A key challenge for the research was the fact that MURP is poorly documented. Procedures, mechanisms and systems are held to a great extent in the consciousness and memory of the people in charge of implementation; as a result, the programme is highly organic and customisable to a context and/or the management approach of a specific team. The implication on my research is a higher degree of reliance on the triangulation of qualitative information provided by relevant stakeholders during interviews. The assessment of implementation made by respondents is compared against the expectations that the same respondents held prior to the commencement of the project.

Researching a 'real-live' project led by a government agency carried considerable risk in addition to a sense of anticipation and possibility. Government-led processes are popularly criticised for being bureaucratic, sluggish and unnecessarily cumbersome. Despite the willingness of the implementation team to support the research, obtaining approval from the CoCT to be able to interview municipal officials took two months, which put some pressure on the research timeline. Lastly, the dynamics and outcomes of project implementation inevitably impacted on my research. As subsequent findings sections will discuss in detail, the implementation of MURP in Bonteheuwel was overwhelmingly frustrating and disappointing for the majority of those who were involved, residents and municipal staff alike. As a result, the project ended abruptly some months ahead of schedule, which meant that all community consultations for this research happened after the MURP Bonteheuwel 2017-2019 iteration had officially ended. As a result, it is likely that some community stakeholders approached did not make themselves available to be interviewed because they were drained and cynical about the project.

Researching the MURP Bonteheuwel project required that I remain open and flexible to challenge my own assumptions about institutional collaboration, partnerships and human motivations; to learn to embrace a process outside of my control, and to change the research strategy to suit unfolding events and relationships. It also exposed some of the complex dynamics involved in partnership work between government and community. Foremost, it highlighted the need for time and patience in carrying out research of living practice, especially in the case of complex-adaptive-systems.

3.7 Limitations of applying the case study method to my research

The case study method requires in-depth analysis of actors, events and context by drawing from multiple sources of data in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings. While the researcher made every attempt to follow the method, several practical obstacles were encountered that are worth noting and whose possible impact on findings should be explored.

- Challenges related to the research timeline: obtaining approval from the CoCT for engaging with municipal officials took much longer than initially anticipated; this shortened the primary data collection time over a relevant period of implementation of the MURP.
- Challenges with accessing data: it was found that the Bonteheuwel MURP iteration as well as the MURP programme at large are poorly documented by the City of Cape Town; this meant that the researcher, to a great extent, had to rely on stakeholder interviews to

reconstruct programme implementation as well as the principles and guidelines on which the MURP is based. In addition to this, when the fieldwork started, the 2017-2019 Bonteheuwel iteration had been completed. This meant that little current programme activity could be observed, and community participants were less inclined to make themselves available for interviews or group discussions.

- Challenges related to researcher bias: the researcher's contextual understanding of the South African reality is based on recent lived experience in the country over the last ten years. The connection to South Africa's history of colonisation and apartheid, which occupies an ominous place in the background to this thesis, is recent and not part of the lived experience or memory of the researcher. It is also possible that the researcher's European background may have affected the interpretation of findings by inadvertently having used a misplaced benchmark in the understanding and use of the data.

To mitigate the impact of the above-mentioned challenges, interviews with key informants were conducted, which allowed for the collection of a richer set of data to analyse and triangulate. The researcher believes that despite the challenges in data collection, the information gathered was insightful and valid to arrive at meaningful conclusions.

Having described the methodology used for this thesis, the following section provides an in-depth introduction to the case study, with a focus on the historical circumstances and policy precedents that gave rise to the creation of the MURP. Section 4.2 will provide an overview of the development of urban regeneration policy in South Africa since the advent of democracy; sections 4.3 and 4.4 will introduce the City of Cape Town-led MURP and its foundation, the VPUU; lastly, section 4.5 will provide critical historical, socio-economic and spatial context to the community of Bonteheuwel.

Chapter 4: Case study overview

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the MURP programme, the Bonteheuwel setting and the critical policy and historical context which shaped the evolution of the case study. This context is paramount to improve our understanding of how the case came about, and which internal and external factors contributed to its unique development. Sections 4.2 and 4.3 will provide an overview of the urban regeneration policies and programmes that preceded and inspired the creation of the MURP, and sections 4.4 and 4.5 will introduce the focus of the case study, MURP and Bonteheuwel, respectively.

4.2 Antecedents of MURP: Urban regeneration in democratic South Africa

From the early days of the Mandela presidency, the spatial legacy of apartheid was identified as a key barrier to the development of the New South Africa and urban renewal was earmarked as a critical strategy to undo this legacy.

Soon after being proclaimed president of the country, Nelson Mandela announced the establishment of two key initiatives to address this legacy: the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) Fund and the Special Integrated Presidential Projects, which gave a new impetus to planning and development policy. The two key delivery areas for these programmes were housing and urban renewal. For the purpose of this overview, we will focus on the latter. The RDP White Paper "identified six urban renewal projects focused on violence-torn communities and communities in crisis" as focus for the Special Integrated Presidential Projects (Harrison, Todes & Watson, 2007: 59), of which serviced land in the Cape Flats was among them. The success of these initiatives implemented in highly volatile and contested environments was unequal, with some being considered as good practice (i.e. Kathorus in the East Rand and Cato Manor in Durban) but others were disappointing (Harrison *et al.*, 2007). Despite mixed outcomes, these early urban renewal projects trialled new area-based approaches and laid the foundation for a new set of planning policy and practice in the new century (Harrison *et al.*, 2007).

The Special Integrated Presidential Projects strategy was followed by the National Urban Renewal Programme (NURP) announced by President Mbeki in 2001 "as an area-based approach which would form part of a 10 year initiative to address poverty and

underdevelopment in a targeted area" (Donaldson, du Plessis, Spocter & Massey, 2013). Eight pilot areas were identified around the country, including Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain in the Western Cape. According to Donaldson *et al.* (2013), the NURP was conceived as a holistic investment package into a range of sectors within a node (targeted sectors included economic and social infrastructure, human resource development, enterprise development, local government capacity, poverty alleviation and strengthening of the criminal justice system). A key function of the programme was the coordination of many complementary and competing initiatives, which was meant to be exercised through the steering structures of the three spheres of government (Donaldson *et al.*, 2013). According to Rauch (2002: 6), "co-ordination and integration of the activities of the three spheres of government is one of the major challenges for the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) – in fact, the development of new practices in this respect is one of its major reasons for its existence". While 'integrated governance' became the hallmark of the Mbeki administration, in practice the country's government was starting from scratch with regards to decentralisation and intergovernmental coordination. Not only was inter-governmental coordination problematic, but the funding approach of the URP was based on the concept of 're-prioritisation' within existing national, provincial and local budgets. As a result, most URP projects have struggled to access necessary funds to effect change.

Following Mbeki's governing approach of "central administration with local implementation" (Harrison *et al.*, 2007), several municipalities adopted their own urban renewal strategies following national guidelines. In Cape Town, the government launched the Cape Renewal Strategy (CRS) specifically focused on reducing crime and improving safety through a comprehensive urban renewal approach. Led by the Provincial Department of Community Safety and supported by the City, the programme targeted seven nodes around the city, Bonteheuwel being one of them.

In 2006, a new funding instrument was created to support urban renewal efforts around the country; this is the Neighbourhood Development Programme Grant (NDPG), whose purpose was to "fund, support and facilitate the planning and development of neighbourhood development programmes and projects that will be catalysts for further development in these areas". Managed by National Treasury, the programme has leveraged, in third-party investment, funds exceeding R3.4-bn spent by the grant itself since inception (*Neighbourhood Development Partnership Programme*, n.d.).

This programme soon morphed into the Urban Networks Strategy (UNS) focused on supporting urban centres in achieving the objectives of the National Development Plan. The

UNS maintains the “partnership approach”, defined by Harrison *et al.* (2007) as the implementation strategy, which aims at using public funding to leverage private sector investment in strategic locations via a coordinated set of spatially targeted interventions, i.e. public infrastructure investment, urban management in targeted precincts and the application of financial, non-financial and regulatory instruments, such as development incentives and tax rebates for developers and investors. This is aimed at creating “a network of strategically located centres of economic and social activity (mixed-use hubs)” (*Neighbourhood Development Partnership Programme*, n.d.) Given the diversity of urban environments in South African cities, ‘mixed-use urban hubs’ are classified into either established central business districts with a functioning property market or primary urban centres or hubs in emerging township economies. In both instances, the UNS targets such areas as potential catalysts for urban renewal and development. Through the complementary Cities Support Programme launched by National Treasury in 2011, 18 urban municipalities have been targeted (eight metros and ten secondary cities) “to drive the process of urban consolidation by aligning their capital investment programmes with clear plans for spatial targeting of new development” (Turok, 2016: 14). While the programme offers “technical capacity and an Integrated City Development Grant (ICDG) to incentivise compact urban investment, commitment across government remains uneven and periodic ministerial reshuffles have been disruptive” (Turok, 2015: 19).

This section has reviewed the policies and programmes that, at national level, have paved the way for programmes like MURP to operate at municipal level. The next section introduces VPUU as the other key influence into the MURP’s model.

4.3 The foundations of MURP: VPUU

The origin of the Mayoral Urban Renewal Programme (MURP) responds to a very specific set of circumstances and motivators that colluded in time, which have arguably shaped its performance and track record. Exploring those origins is critical to understanding the future trajectory of the programme up to today.

Aligned with Mbeki’s National Urban Renewal Programme (NURP), the City of Cape Town undertook to implement its own urban renewal programme. Funding from the German Development Bank (Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau or KfW) was made available to the National Treasury to support violence prevention through infrastructural investment and town centre upgrading in Cape Town; through an international tender, a German consulting group was appointed to set up a local team that would act as implementing agency for the City with

an initial focus on Mitchell's Plain and Khayelitsha. In 2005, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU) was launched as a programme of the City of Cape Town (CoCT) implemented by an independent service provider. In parallel, the City established an internal Urban Renewal Programme (URP) department tasked to accompany VPUU and to ultimately take over and scale up the model to other parts of the City.

According to VPUU's manual, VPUU is a "comprehensive, area-based model, which aims at reducing crime, increasing safety and security and improving the living and social conditions of the affected populations through urban improvements and social interventions" (Krause, Giles, Shay, Cooke, Smith, Taani & Lange, n.d.). The programme's model is built around five principles and strategic areas, namely:

1. *Situational crime prevention*: Including spatial intervention through urban design, physical upgrading and the building of facilities;
2. *Social crime prevention*: Working socially to prevent crime while also building community identity and independence;
3. *Community operation, maintenance and management:* Assisting the community through development to deliver services and to manage facilities;
4. *Community participation*: The full involvement of local people in all aspects of the programme, and
5. *Knowledge management*: Ensuring that lessons learned, and knowledge gained are recorded and shared after the programme.

In its origins, the VPUU and URP teams worked closely (out of the same office) to contextually adapt, refine and ultimately implement the model which, according to interviewees, was characterised by innovation and flexibility in its design and implementation. At the time, VPUU's programmes were implemented primarily in Khayelitsha.

VPUU's programme theory assumed that if community structures were strengthened, social cohesion would improve, and this would support the long-term sustainability of any infrastructure upgrade. One of the best examples of this concept was the creation of a 'social development fund' aimed at strengthening community and fostering social cohesion by funding community-based responses to local issues (i.e. small grant for the upgrading and formalisation of ECD centres, requiring 10% of co-funding by grantees in the form of direct funding or 'sweat equity'[7]). It was similarly understood that the funding mechanism would have

[7] Sweat equity in investment circles is understood as a non-monetary contribution that the individuals or founders of a company make towards the company.

to be agile, albeit rigorous, to effect change in communities in the short term. A dedicated foreign bank account was set up, which allowed a dual management team (URP and VPUU) to approve proposals and release funds within a month's turnaround, while following the City's supply chain policies.

However, in 2012 NURP came to an end and, owing to reasons of efficiency and accountability requirements of the funder, the Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP) was created and housed within the Mayoral office in the City of Cape Town to channel the ongoing funding committed by the KfW.

4.4 MURP: Background and rationale

The Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP) was established by the City of Cape Town in 2013 to continue the urban regeneration efforts of NURP and VPUU. The overall goal of the MURP is "to uplift former neglected and dysfunctional areas in a targeted manner through integrated interventions on geographic spaces such as Central Business Districts, Town Centres, Public Transport Interchanges, Community/Civic nodes, Transit Oriented Development Corridors and activity streets. Emphasis is placed on improving safety, quality of life and the socio-economic conditions with a particular focus on the public and shared environment" (*Status report: Implementation of Mayoral Urban Renegeration Programme (MURP) Projects in Sub Council 5*, 2017: 2).

Several critical elements appear to underpin the MURP design and implementation, including:

- Precinct management theory developed by National Treasury;
- Situational crime prevention approach developed by the Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading Programme (VPUU).
- Partnership approach with local community, civil society organisations, the private sector and other tiers of government. This approach is necessary to ensure a coordinated and holistic response as well as to maximise the sustainability of the interventions.
- Place-making focused on improving the functionality and use of public space, by improving cleanliness, safety and security to directly improve user experience.
- Community participation and inclusive involvement of local stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of action plans.

The MURP targets nine communities in the Cape Town Metropole, Bonteheuwel being one of them. It is unclear when the programme was first introduced in Bonteheuwel but consulted

documentation dates to 2014. The following section will provide critical historical, socio-economic and spatial context to Bonteheuwel.

4.5 Bonteheuwel: Historical, socio-economic and spatial context

Bonteheuwel lies approximately 15km to the east of Cape Town CBD, accessible from the N2 highway on the south and bordering the railway line on the east and north. Figure 1 below situates Bonteheuwel in relation to the Cape Flats and the Cape Town Metropole. The figure also categorises municipal wards according to a socio-economic index developed from 2011 Census data.

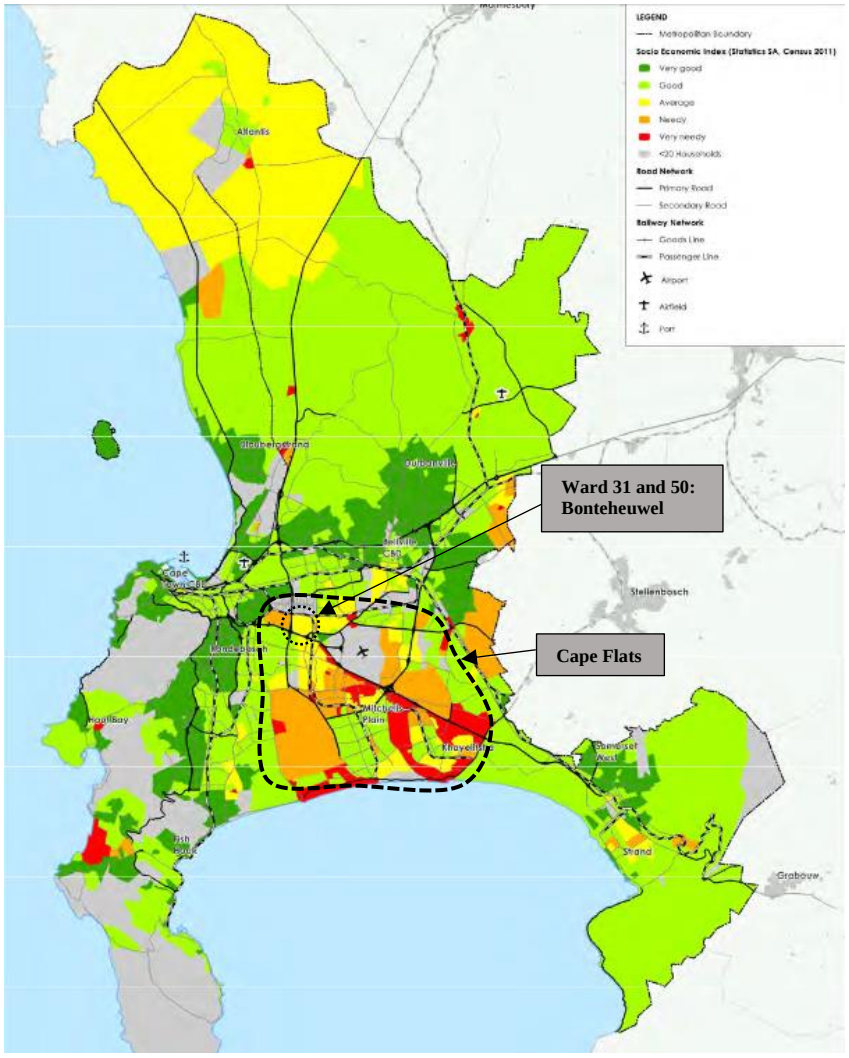

Figure 1 Map of the Cape Town Metropole. Socio-Economic Index (2014)

Source 1Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF), 2018

Bonteheuwel was one of the first suburbs declared a Group Area for coloured people in 1965 and served to accommodate residents forcibly removed from newly declared white areas in the City, such as District Six and Goodwood.

The consequences of this forced relocation had immediate tangible consequences for the new residents: 50 per cent of the dwellings in Bonteheuwel had two rooms or less, which inevitably led to overcrowding. Residents in Bonteheuwel could not own homes because the area had not been passed as a local authority area – a basic requirement for the transfer of home ownership rights under the apartheid administration. Education facilities were insufficient: while nearly half of Bonteheuwel's population of 45,000 inhabitants was 18 years of age or below in 1980, there were only three secondary schools in the area (Staniland, 2011). The township was not well connected with other parts of the city, with only three exit roads (Staniland, 2011). From their state rental housing homes, workers commuted into Cape Town to work as domestic workers and cleaning staff, construction workers in the city's building sites and factory workers in the light industry of Epping Industrial Estate to the north of the township (Staniland, 2011: 12).

As early as 1977, Dewar identified large spatial barriers in the planning of Bonteheuwel, which gave an early indication of some of the social and economic problems that the community would later experience. Given that the spatial configuration of the suburb has not changed much since, his conclusions still apply, namely: roads are used only as movement channels instead of being integrated with residential developments into activity corridors; modernist planning theory at the time dictated uniformity of public spaces, residential building and community developments, which led to "forced anonymity" and limited self-expression (Dewar, 1977). Even the town centre which concentrates the necessary elements to create a functional area, appears to have been randomly designed and planned.

Figure 2 below presents a street plan of Bonteheuwel and points to some of the urban planning constraints specifically identified by the MURP Bonteheuwel team.

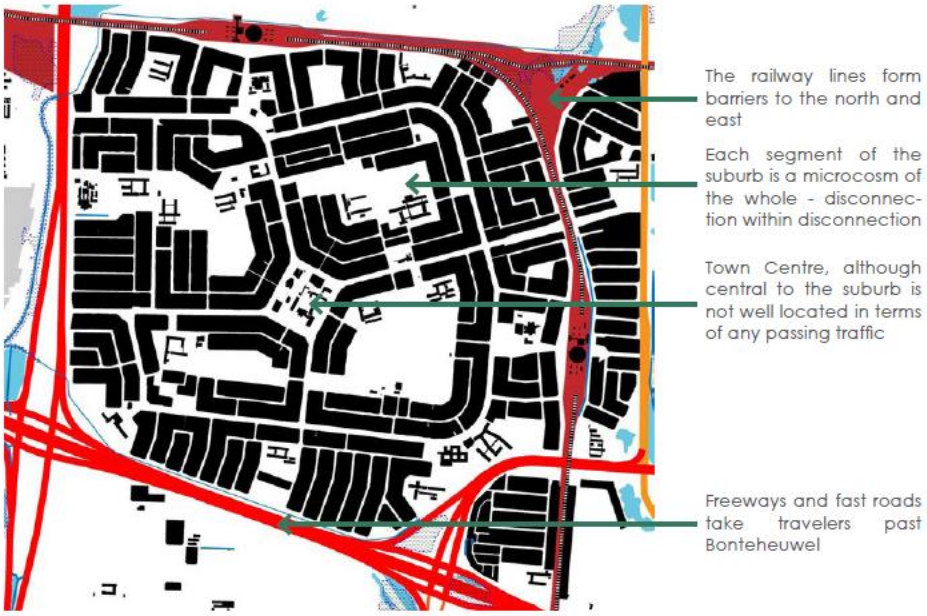

Figure 2 Street map of Bonteheuwel with initial planning analysis by the MURP team

Source: Bonteheuwel Call to Action, 2018

During the 1980s public facilities were upgraded "as the state sought to tackle political militancy through state spending" (Staniland, 2011: 38). This gradual upgrading continued into the 1990s and in the 2000s, when a multi-purpose centre and a police station were built with funds from the Reconstruction and Development Programme.

Above all, forced resettlement led to family rupture and community disintegration. Together with the Group Areas Act, a second fundamental programme in the apartheid design shaped the destiny of the Western Cape province, namely, the 'Coloured[8] Labour Preference' Policy. According to this policy, employers were disincentivised to recruit black Africans and the construction of new housing in demarcated black African areas was stopped, despite a growing rate of urban migration as a result of emerging changes in the structure of the economy. The apartheid state had steamed the Western Province as the 'traditional sphere of the coloured' and in that way justified the principle of racial hierarchy seemingly in favour of the coloured population (Horner, 1983). In addition to creating a housing crisis of great proportions, the labour preference policy had long-lasting unintended consequences for the social fabric and the political alliance of the coloured working class.

Staniland (2011) argues that the deracialisation of the South African economy and welfare state has negatively impacted the coloured working class who, after benefitting from artificial

[8] Coloured is the racial denomination officially introduced by the South African government from 1950 to 1991, to define a person of mixed European ("white") and African ("black") or Asian ancestry.

skills shortages, experienced both falling wages and rising unemployment[9]. “Within this context the continuing identification amongst the coloured working class with the party of apartheid is far from surprising” (Staniland, 2011: 413).

Today, Bonteheuwel has over 32, 000 residents, of which 32% are under 18 years of age, only 43% are employed, (compared to the 60% national average) (*City of Cape Town. Socio-economic profile*, 2016), a high school dropout rate, a dysfunctional urban economy and a concerning problem of drugs and gangsterism, which affects mostly the youth (Arendse & Patel, 2014).

According to *Bonteheuwel Call to Action* (2018: 6) report, “Bonteheuwel was chosen as an urban regeneration intervention area in 2014 due to its dysfunctional nature and its steady decline in terms of bad environmental qualities and the increase in crime and gangsterism. The original intentions have not changed since then and are still focussed on improving the safety, quality of life and socio-economic situation of the area with a particular focus on public spaces”.

4.6 Summary

The Cape Town community of Bonteheuwel embodies many of the socio-economic challenges which people experience in post-apartheid South Africa. The scar of forced removals together with the spatial disenfranchisement and restricted mobility determined by the physical configuration of the suburb have enabled economic exclusion, social fracture, criminality and gangsterism to flourish.

In line with national policy on urban regeneration and development, the MURP emerged in 2013 from a set of complicated governmental and organisational arrangements. The review of the trajectory of urban regeneration policy since the advent of democracy, with its emphasis on intergovernmental coordination and devolution of power to the local sphere, creates the impression that the spatial dimension has been a central focus of the new development agenda in South Africa. However, only in 2016 did South Africa approve the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) as an overarching framework “to strengthen urban economies, resource efficiency and social progress” (Turok, 2015: 18). Until then, successive governments have been torn between the rural – urban dichotomy as a strategy for development and, as a result, urban regeneration has resembled more a collection of

[9] According to Staniland (2011: 38) the area of Bonteheuwel registered around 6% unemployment rate compared to 54.9% of individuals 15 and older, who are either unemployed or not economically active (City of Cape Town, n.d.)

initiatives targeting particular crime-ridden townships or run-down inner cities with a focus more on “poverty alleviation and physical renewal, rather than economic and employment growth. Equity and redress were more pressing priorities than efficiency or transformation” (Turok, 2016: 4).

Lack of intra- and inter-governmental policy coherence as well as insufficient backing of municipal urban strategies by national government have prevailed and have had negative consequences for the outcomes of programmes like the MURP.

Having provided the social, political and physical context to the case study, the following chapter will discuss the findings of the research.

Chapter 5: Research findings

5.1 Introduction

As indicated in the preceding sections of this thesis, the overarching objective of this study is to contribute to the body of planning theory and practice rooted in the reality of Cape Town, a city in the Global South.

Specifically, the study attempted to address the following research sub-objectives:

1) To demonstrate how Bonteheuwel can be understood as a complex adaptive system;
2) To apply the 'conflicting rationalities' lens to the study of planning interventions in the Global South, such as the MURP in Bonteheuwel, Cape Town.
3) To explore the characteristics of a complexity-based governance approach to urban regeneration in the Global South.

This chapter presents the findings of the research: section 5.3 addresses research sub-objective number 1 and sections 5.4 and 5.5 address sub-objective number 2. The characteristics of a complexity-based governance approach to urban regeneration in the Global South are presented as concluding remarks in chapter 6.

5.2 Rediscovering Bonteheuwel through the lens of complexity

The promise of complexity theory is not only to help us improve our understanding of the world around us, as it is often messy, intricate and unexpected, but also to see the immense possibility that it holds if we learn to engage and manage it appropriately.

This section will discuss Bonteheuwel from the lens of complexity theory using the MURP programme 2017-2019 iteration as an entry point. The purpose of the discussion is to demonstrate that Bonteheuwel is a complex-adaptive system (CAS) by way of describing the characteristics that it exhibits. To carry out this descriptive analysis, the taxonomy adapted from Preiser *et al.* (2018) and discussed in section 2.4 of this document will be used.

Bonteheuwel is a highly connected system

Elements or agents within a CAS display tight relations and connectivity. When relations are particularly strong, agents may form sub-systems. Some agents may share bonds with several sub-systems and therefore belong to more than one of them.

In a similar fashion, Bonteheuwel's residents relate to each other often and in various ways: family members, neighbours, friends all have established connections that are pursued and nurtured even if they are not formally constituted or regulated. Connectivity also takes place through legally established organisations such as businesses, religious institutions, schools and their governing structures, non-profit organisations and civic structures. Gangs are indisputably a form of sub-system (according to one interviewee, there are 30 gangs known to the police in Bonteheuwel), which, as it is widely documented in the literature, presents very structured patterns of relations.

Some interviewees intimated that the living conditions of people in a low-working class neighbourhood such as Bonteheuwel encourage higher connectivity, inter-dependency and reciprocity among residents than in more affluent communities. From a complexity perspective, that cherished 'sense of community' spoken about at several interviews is the emergent property resulting from the existence of high connectivity.

Interviews also revealed that connectivity crosses the time dimension: for example, some people have had connections with other members in the past (in the days of youth activism during apartheid) and those relationships still define them to this day and mark the ways in which they relate to other community members.

Bonteheuwel is unique, but not unified

A central characteristic of CAS is that it is the relationships that agents establish among themselves that truly describe the system and not necessarily the nature of the agents found within. Such defining relations can be found among agents and between agents and their environment.

In the previous section we have discussed the high connectivity found in Bonteheuwel. However, we cannot make the mistake of assuming that a highly connected CAS equals a unified CAS. The second characteristic of the CAS taxonomy postulates that high levels of connectivity together with the diverse nature of relations established by agents mean that they often perform seemingly contradictory functions: interviewees spoke about how political agendas, interest groups and power struggles may give the impression of Bonteheuwel as a "*completely divided entity*". A few interviewees reflected on how power battles, in low-working class and poor communities are strikingly common. According to Heylighen *et al.* (2007: 125), this response should be expected: CAS agents are "*intrinsically egocentric or selfish*" and tend to act based on short-term return, ignoring the long-term effects of their actions.

During the interviews, community members alluded to such contradictions by fellow Bonteheuwel residents when reflecting on community attitudes to drugs and gangsterism in the area. One interviewee provided an illustrative example of this CAS characteristic: while protests against gang violence are common in the area, police officials are often stoned by mothers of known gang members while their children are on the run on the streets. According to the interviewee *"…our biggest challenge is our mindset! The mentality of our people… people don't rise up for themselves… they think: 'we made this bed that we sleep in, it's ours. This is our way of life*'". The intuitively complex relationship of a mother with her gangster son becomes even more complex if we consider that gangs run successful networks of patronage in Bonteheuwel, which for several families constitute their sole source of subsistence.

What happens in Bonteheuwel cannot be considered in isolation of its context

A CAS is highly dependent on the environment in which it operates; the boundaries between a CAS and its environment are often permeable and agents within the system often change their role or function to adapt to the changing context (Chu, Strand & Fjelland, 2003). Complexity theory alerts us to the importance of the environment in which a CAS operates.

Bonteheuwel can be seen as a sub-system of bigger systems: from the perspective of the political administration, Bonteheuwel is represented by two wards, Ward 50 and Ward 31, which are two of the 116 wards that constitute the Cape Town Metropolitan Area. Spatially, Bonteheuwel can be described as a fragmented 'island' surrounded by high flowing vehicular roads, which segregate the community from other neighbouring communities and, Cape Town. Bonteheuwel is one of the predominantly coloured townships in the Cape Flats area, and therefore shares history and characteristics with other townships across the Cape Flats. When considering the economic system in Bonteheuwel, while local patterns of organisation may emerge, the overarching system is highly influenced by the economic policies of the South African government, which is part of the highly open and interconnected world economy.

The example of the effects of Cape Town's water crisis on the Bonteheuwel MURP in 2018 is an illustrative case of the porous boundaries of the community and the programme to the changes occurring in its immediate context: the budget originally announced to be used for implementing the Community Action Plan was by all accounts redirected towards the management of the drought. Another example of this openness was the impact of the 2019 provincial and general elections celebrated in April: according to several interviewees, the upcoming elections resulted in further polarisation of community members along party lines as well as a slowdown of decision-making processes by the municipality.

Self-organisation and activism in Bonteheuwel have changed… but remain the same

The dynamic interactions that constitute a CAS reinforce a pattern of constant evolution and change. A key characteristic of this dynamism is the system's capacity for self-organisation and co-evolution, which allows it to better interact with its environment (Preiser *et al.*, 2018).

Arguably, the self-organising capacity of a socio-cultural CAS such as Bonteheuwel refers not only to citizen activism but more broadly to any activity undertaken by several agents for the purpose of system advancement. Without exhaustively analysing all the community based initiatives born out of Bonteheuwel, the interviews provided some examples: the Jazz Yard Academy dedicated to teaching music to the youth while keeping them off the streets after school; a daily soup kitchen run from the backyard of the house by a single mother of two young adults; the Ashley Kriel Skills Development Centre aimed at supporting Bonteheuwel youth during their secondary education and capacitating them for the world of work. These are all examples of Bonteheuwel CAS agents organising themselves and adopting specific functions in response to a hostile environment and capitalising on the tight connectivity of its members.

The history that considers Bonteheuwel one of the centres of anti-apartheid activism in the Western Cape is also a testament to the self-organisation capacities of the area. From the establishment of the Bonteheuwel Military Wing (BMW) in the second half of the 1980s "to co-ordinate and intensify the revolutionary activities" ("Truth Commission - Special Report - TRC Final Report - Volume 3, Section 1, Chapter", n.d.) to the adoption of the #TotalShutDown Movement in 2018 to enact mass protests against crime and violence in the community, Bonteheuwel has important activist credentials and a rich history of mobilisation. One of the community members interviewed reflected on Bonteheuwel's political evolution along the following lines:

"We're in a certain stage of our political journey… a stage of maturity; from mass mobilisation pre-1994… then we got what we fought for… a lot of civil structures died… now 25 years down the line, you see no change. #TotalShutDown was a moment in the past…we fought against the same things [in the 2000s manifested in the form of crime and gangsterism] *and yet after the 'honeymoon period' all has died. The community is a shimmering pot at the moment".*

Despite the seemingly defeating tone of the statement, the respondent went on to announce that "*old activists are coming out of the woodwork*" and promoting neighbours' reorganisation in street committees to find solutions to local problems and negotiate with government. New realities require new approaches and a CAS is capable to reinvent itself to confront the

changing circumstances of its internal and external environment, which in turn often activates a different response from the environment. This is exemplified by a comment of one of the government officials interviewed, when stating that the #TotalShutDown movement "*made politicians reprioritise*" resulting in a higher budget allocation to the new iteration of MURP Bonteheuwel by the newly elected administration in April 2019.

A memory of inaction and neglect affects the community's engagement ability

The distinctive capacity of CAS to adapt and learn is one of its most powerful attributes and contributes to its survival and evolution. It is the capacity that allows system agents to adopt new functions and establish new relations among themselves and with the environment. This capacity is strongly guided by individual and collective memory, "with the implication that past events and configurations codetermine the present, and the system's present state codetermines future system configurations" (Poli, 2009 & Woermann, 2016 in Preiser & Woermann (2019: 2). The implications of this characteristic for a programme such as MURP are critical.

Interviews with community members revealed that there is a deep-seated sentiment of disillusionment and frustration born out of a history of unfulfilled promises and slow pace of change in the community. During interviews, community representatives involved with the MURP explained how they took over their positions as elected representatives with a level of scepticism, which grew bigger as the programme appeared stuck in seemingly unintelligible bureaucratic processes and veered off path due to the political agendas of local politicians. A common theme through the interviews is the experience of neglect and lack of service delivery by government over many years, which goes back to the experience of "displacement" enforced by a "paternalistic government", as described by a government official. Arguably the sentiments of suspicion and mistrust held by community members when engaging with government constitute the adaptive response of complex adaptive system agents to the disappointing performance of the environment, which acts as a negative (inhibiting) feedback loop. In practice, this protective behaviour may have initially led to misunderstandings among city officials and, eventually, to partial or no collaboration exemplified by the early dissolution of the project steering committee.

Social systems like Bonteheuwel are often unpredictable, specially where contestation over power and space is the norm

This property alerts to a CAS capacity to give rise to qualities that cannot be traced back to the attributes of any of its internal components. Those properties often manifest in the form of

complex, unintended changes with disproportionately small or large effects on other parts or the system as a whole (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984; Holling, 2001; Levin *et al*., 2013 in Preiser *et al.,* 2018).

Non-linearity as a property of CAS defies the Newtonian rationale of direct and immediate cause and effect relationship of events. The density of interactions within a CAS coupled with the ability to constantly evolve and adapt make its behaviour highly unpredictable. This is arguably one of the most relevant characteristics of the CAS taxonomy for planning practice in developing contexts like South Africa, where contestation over power and space is the norm. One of the all too frequent manifestations of non-linearity is the lack of upkeep and vandalism of public infrastructure deployed by government in communities as part of infrastructure upgrade projects. While specific examples of this phenomenon did not present themselves during the Bonteheuwel MURP iteration under study, there are sufficient examples in Cape Town and around the country to not find it surprising that the theme emerged on numerous occasions during the interviews: as a risk to control for and mitigate by government officials; as a seemingly perverse feature of the 'community mindset' which needs to be corrected; and as a puzzling conundrum for those government officials truly committed to positive change in disadvantaged communities.

Conclusion

Bonteheuwel presents clear characteristics of a complex adaptive system. By rediscovering the community through the lens of complexity, we improve our understanding of internal dynamics and relationships and can begin to meaningfully engage with the system.

5.3 Conflicting rationalities in MURP: Voices from and within the state

This section discusses the complex and contradictory workings of the state. I start by contextualising the planning and implementation of the MURP 2017-2019 iteration in Bonteheuwel in a chronological fashion, rendering it as a story with eight episodes. The section profiles the changing narratives of actors and representatives of state institutions as these episodes unfold.

Conflicting motivators, contested mandate

The MURP emerged from a complicated set of circumstances and institutional arrangements at national and local government level. While subsequent national governments, since democratic rule was stablished in South Africa, have emphasised the need for urban renewal

in the country's most troubled urban and peri-urban communities, the MURP appears to have been set up with the additional motivation to gain and sustain political support for the municipal Mayor at the time.

The research found several instances of misalignment in the design and implementation of the MURP against other local policies and practices. For example, while it is generally accepted that all areas targeted by the MURP are in need of investment and targeted support, government employees interviewed recognised that some target communities, such as Bonteheuwel, fall outside of the City's 2017 - 2022 Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the 2018 Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) priority areas, which has brought about significant challenges for the MURP team in terms of gaining buy-in from other departments to align their strategies and budgets accordingly. Most interviewees spoke about the '*highly politicised nature of MURP*' in an apparent attempt to explain instances of misalignment or seeming contradiction between MURP strategic priorities in the City.

Turok's argument (2015, 2016) about the late and slow pace of adoption of a national urban policy in the form of the IUDF begins to clarify those contradictions. It points to the complex set of motivators and circumstances that often guide policy development and implementation approaches within the government apparatus. As discussed by most interviewees, the tension between political and administrative priorities is a permanent feature of the workings of the developmental state and tends to manifest most clearly within the sphere of local government (de Satgé & Watson, 2018).

In light of this, the appropriateness of the MURP in relation to local policy is questionable and this makes successful implementation very complicated from the onset.

In the backdrop: Area-based urban regeneration by local government

When in 2013, VPUU became a not-for-profit-company to continue its work partially in the City but more primarily to expand the model to other communities in the province, MURP needed to adapt the VPUU model to its new operating context within local government. This section discusses the key adaptations that MURP introduced, which became the implementing strategy for MURP in Bonteheuwel.

As previously indicated, the purpose of the MURP is to coordinate the delivery of infrastructural, social and economic development services to a designated area through the facilitation of transversal cooperation among city departments. MURP has moved institutional homes on a couple of occasions owing to changes in political leadership and related

restructuring of institutional functions. For the period up to 2016, MURP was housed by the Spatial Planning and Urban Design Department in the City, which enabled close collaboration with city planners. In 2016, a major organisational restructuring of the City administration[10] was responsible for the relocation of the MURP to the Urban Management Department, then renamed Area Based Service Delivery. MURP was tasked to implement urban renewal programmes in 13 metropolitan communities using the VPUU approach. The change of institutional home of the MURP is relevant not only because of the inevitable disruption it caused to programme delivery due to changes in personnel and management, but also because it raises pertinent questions about organisational concepts and approaches under the Area Based Approach (ABA). Different city departments are brought together through coordinated budgets and action plans to pursue common priorities previously identified for a particular geographic area. While the merits of this approach are widely accepted in governance theory, findings from the research reveal that inter-departmental collaboration is far from real in local government practice, and a 'silo-mentality' still drives public service in the City of Cape Town.

Implementing ABA within the above-mentioned constraints inherent in local government meant that the role of MURP shifted from one of primary implementing agent to primary coordinator of internal departmental efforts and facilitator of engagement with communities. With regard to funding, while the MURP has an annual operating budget allocated by the City, sizeable project funding is not readily available; instead the programme is heavily reliant on the buy-in and collaboration of relevant City departments to make budget and staff allocations to the implementation of community plans. From a planning perspective, the MURP follows a precinct management approach to spatial planning and urban regeneration. *Precinct management* refers to the day to day operational management of a specific portion of the urban environment, which is small but represents a significant hub of urban activity characterised by mixed land-use and modal interchanges (*The Art of Precinct Management: A Municipal Guide*, 2014). The precinct management model followed by the MURP and promoted by Treasury's Neighbourhood Development Partnership Programme is based on a partnership framework where government, business owners and private investors, non-government organisations (NGOs) and community organisations, the informal sector and the general public come together to participate in and support a management structure for a particular area. It is generally recognised, however, that establishing sustainable partnerships and funding models in under resourced areas is particularly challenging. This is also

[10] The Organisational Development and Transformation Plan (ODTP) was a major organisational development process implemented by Mayor Patricia De Lille in 2016 to restructure the CoCT towards enhanced service delivery, a more adaptive and innovative response and increased transversal collaboration.

recognised by national government, as illustrated by the following extract: “key nodes in townships still require significant investment in the built environment, both in terms of infrastructure, public facilities and building. In this context the public sector has a much greater role to play, both in terms of broader urban-management and place-making, but also in terms of ensuring that precincts are well managed and operated prior to implementation of capital projects” according to *The Art of Precinct Management: A Municipal Guide* (2014: 6).

During the research, government officials described the VPUU model as a “*very comprehensive and resource intensive process of community engagement*”, which is difficult to reproduce within the constraints of government workings, where procedures are traditionally stiffening, and staff are stretched and do not often have the required facilitation skills. In addition, political priorities of the City leadership at the time drove the expansion of the programme outside of the municipal boundaries, which further stretched the capacity of the MURP team. One of the interviewees explained the critical implication brought about by this strategy: “*ABA is a very intensive, targeted approach of consultation and work with communities. When the targeted communities increase but the capacity of the implementing teams does not augment proportionally, then efforts get diluted*”. This is precisely the scenario that unfolded. Another interviewee used a graphic analogy to illustrate the dilemma: “*MURP is like a baby that is not properly born*”. According to Donaldson *et al.* (2013), the success of an area-based approach (ABA) lies in the establishment of an intermediary organisation, preferably locally-based, with a flexible platform of resources.

Project inception stages: Building an implementation team

The Bonteheuwel MURP 2017 – 2019 iteration built on previous engagement and work by the MURP programme in the community. While the research did not go into any level of detail in the understanding of past implementation, respondents spoke about two past circumstances which appear to have influenced the implementation process under study.

According to one of the municipal officials interviewed, “*Bonteheuwel had suffered from a history of bad decision making by the city*” and city-deployed consultants prior to 2017. While PSC members interviewed were aware that MURP had been active in Bonteheuwel in the past, they could not cite any positive changes brought about by the programme. This perception may have contributed to the scepticism displayed by PSC members entering the partnership.

In addition, the management of MURP in Bonteheuwel changed as a result of internal personnel restructuring, once community engagement had been initiated and the PSC had

been elected. According to community member responses, the change in leadership of the programme was a positive one: "[with the previous manager], *we were going nowhere slowly*…!". Respondents complained about the slow progress that the programme had made up until that point, which is also illustrated by the fact that most PSC members were unclear about their specific roles, months after their election.

The new MURP manager who joined the team brought on board two team members from outside of the department: an urban designer and planner working for the City, who had been tasked with implementing precinct planning in a neighbouring suburb, Bishop Lavis, and had worked in Bonteheuwel in the past, and a retired university professor in business management in charge of facilitating priority setting and project design processes with community members. Together with the MURP community liaison officer, this was the core implementing team.

From the interviews it appears evident that the team was formed by a multidisciplinary group of professionals who brought complementary skills and were like-minded in their understanding of community engagement and socio-economic development of communities. The close partnership between an urban planner and the new MURP Area Manager was forged during the brief period that the MURP programme fell within the Urban Design and Planning Department at the City. The official's involvement with the MURP was described by other officials as 'innovative' and recognised as a sign of exceptional personal commitment towards service delivery and community development. In contrast, the planning official, who had recently taken up employment with the City, saw her participation as a natural fit: "*it was a project in my area that required my involvement! I work for the City… this is how it should be done… across silos!*".

Despite this positive example of inter-departmental collaboration between an urban designer and a public service and community facilitation expert, other examples of silo mentality and lack of collaboration became a recurrent theme across interviews with government officials and external partners, which reveal a more worrying reality of disjuncture between policy and practice in the municipality: while a *transversal* approach is hailed in the City's IDP (*City of Cape Town Integrated Development Plan 2017 - 2022*, 2017) as one of six strategic guiding principles, the day to day reality of service delivery is far from that. This is particularly detrimental for urban planning interventions, which are multi-dimensional and require input from various sectors. The example above illustrates that it is the values and beliefs of the individual public servant and not policy that often shapes the direction of public service.

Partnering with the community

Critical at the initial stages of MURP implementation is the engagement with community, and the setting up of the project steering committee (PSC), which is the vehicle for community participation.

Because of the change in management, the new MURP team was forced to accept the legacy of the previous team and work with an already established PSC. According to the interviews, the election of the PSC had not followed due process in terms of selecting duly authorised representatives by formally constituted community organisations and, as a result, the PSC was soon deemed illegitimate and lacking credibility as the City counterpart in the community. One interviewee explained that the PSC "*was not a uniting entity but instead there were different interest groups, different agendas"*.

The design and implementation of this participation vehicle closely follows the structure of the ward committee system, which has been the primary form of community representation and engagement in the City of Cape Town since the early 2000s (Esau, 2008). A few MURP city officials indeed acknowledged the inherent limitations of the system. By following the ward committee structure, the risk of political interference by local ward councillors is very high and can result in the exclusion or marginalisation of a certain segment of the community. While it is not the aim of this study to establish the legitimacy of the claims relating to political interference, it is clear from the interviews that such divisions had a damaging impact on the perceptions held by PSC members of the MURP process and appear to have strongly contributed to the dismantling of the PSC prior to the end of its term.

Some officials, however, defended the validity of the system based on the principles of representative democracy arguing that the municipality can only possibly work with formalised organisations, because any other formula would lead to illegitimate, if not fraudulent representation. As illustrated by the quote below: "*otherwise, anyone can form a community organisation with their family members…!*". Overall, most MURP implementation team respondents believe that Bonteheuwel is deeply divided by internal skirmishes, and meetings pertaining to matters of common interest are poorly attended (from school meetings to public participation meetings organised by local government). One official reflected on the possible reasons for this: "*what is an easier way of demonstrating power in a community setting? This is often about blocking things …processes or showing the City up. It's a power struggle*".

It can be argued that at the core of this sentiment lies an unmet expectation nested in a deeply entrenched simplification held by many public officials: the expectation of an organised community that will present a united front behind their duly elected community representatives. This, though, is hardly ever the reality in poor resource settings and highly neglected areas,

especially in the Global South, which present deep divides along the distribution of power, influence and resource access (de Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Implementing the project: Identifying needs and priorities

An important step in the MURP methodology is the development of a Community Action Plan (CAP) with the active participation of the community. Various sources of information feed into the content of this plan (baseline data, contextual information, the City's planning documents, etc.), most importantly the outcome of the needs' prioritisation process with the PSC and other community representatives.

The consultation and design process were implemented in the form of participatory workshops open to community members interested in themes previously identified by the PSC. For example, since families and children's education was identified as a priority area, MURP called on parents, teachers and educators to participate in the relevant workshop. During observation, it was found that, while less participants took part in the workshop than initially anticipated, once underway, discussions were robust and centred on the concerns and aspirations of the community.

The immediate output of this process was a CAP document that laid out a long-term strategy (up to 2026) to 'turn-around, accelerate and sustain improvement' in Bonteheuwel (*Bonteheuwel. Call to Action*, 2018). The strategy aims at achieving four key objectives, namely:

1. Vibrant and resilient community,
2. Public spaces and facilities that work,
3. Ease of movement, and
4. Access to opportunities.

To achieve each objective, ten programmatic areas were identified as well as several specific projects within each area. In the short-term, the team focused on mobilising support to implement infrastructure upgrading projects in the CBD area as well as social and economic development interventions with families, youth and entrepreneurs.

Due to the change of head figures on Bonteheuwel MURP as well as regular delays in organising community consultations, priority workshops were still being organised in August 2018, over one year into the two-year mandate period of PSC members. Government representatives argued that the length of the PSC mandate had been set as such to ensure

healthy rotation of residents in positions of influence. As consecutive sections of this case study will show, however, two years appears insufficient time to allow for meaningful member participation and influence on the slow-turning wheels of government. The interviews reveal that this short timeframe left PSC members feeling frustrated about their inability to see any work through.

The CAP was complemented with a Public Investment Framework (PIF) which linked specific projects to indicative costs and budgets. The next step for the MURP team at this point was to engage and mobilise local government departments in the actual delivery.

Financing upgrading through mobilisation and lobbying

While the MURP has an annual operating budget allocated by the City, sizeable project funding is not readily available; instead it is heavily reliant on the buy-in and collaboration of relevant City departments to make budget and staff allocations to the implementation of community plans.

According to the research, the team had an allocation of R750 000 as start-up funding, which was earmarked towards 'community activation'. However, the budget required to implement year 1 and 2 of the CAP is estimated to have been considerably higher. Through the various urban development support programmes discussed in previous sections, the South African government has made available various funding mechanisms for provinces and cities to access through competitive application processes (i.e. UNGP). However, the MURP manager admitted that funding is not readily available because such "*procedures are cumbersome, and timing is long and tedious*".

Given the available budget, the focus for the 2017-2019 period was placed on three key projects that were expected to act as catalysers of further development, ultimately aimed at creating a functional and dynamic central business district (CBD). The three projects included: the installation of perimeter fencing and removal of internal fencing within Freedom Square, which prevented mobility and secured access; the landscaping and beautification of the square to incorporate several multi-purpose open courts and trading stalls to revitalise and activate the area; and the rehabilitation and repurposing of an inefficient and derelict municipal building currently housing law enforcement and a few small businesses.

Securing the necessary funding would require intensive engagement and lobbying of city departments by the MURP team.

The contradictions of inter-departmental collaboration within local government

The upgrading of the municipal building was designed to incorporate other developmental elements aimed at expanding the socio-economic impact of the intervention: following the outcome of the needs and priorities identification process facilitated by the MURP team, the building was meant to house a resource centre promoting skills development and entrepreneurship; co-working space for emerging entrepreneurs as well as rental space for small businesses.

However, securing support and funding from other departments and spheres of government to implement the project constituted one of the greatest challenges for the programme.

Consensus among government officials interviewed points to the lack of direction and solutions to deal with 'grey spaces' such as public space or multi-purpose facilities in the City, especially when they fall within poorly resourced and violence-ridden areas, as one of the structural barriers for the MURP to operate. This aspect is a key model adaptation form VPUU, which appears not to have been resolved.

The VPUU model relies on external funding to reward community members responsible for ongoing precinct and facility management in the form of stipends (currently, funding comes from KfW). This is what a government official interviewed defined as a "*trap of quite expensive subsidisation*". The official then reflected on the merits of the MURP and the broader precinct management model by saying: "*The City never found a way towards sustainably financing long-term management of public space and facilities (maintenance, security, cleaning, etc.). MURP could roll out the CAP and departments could agree on redirecting portions of their capital budgets, but [the funding for] ongoing management is still a 'nut to be cracked'*".

Other contextual factors challenge the implementation of precinct management in areas like Bonteheuwel, for example, the high levels of violent crime. As illustrated by the comment from an interviewee: "*park officials are being used as shields by the gangs… cleaning staff are putting their lives at risk… and there's no extra pay for working in dangerous situations*". As a result, line managers prefer not to put the lives of their employees at risk and are inclined not to take responsibility for managing a precinct in a violent area.

While MURP could have secured capital funding to implement the necessary infrastructure upgrade of the building and surroundings (i.e. through its partnership with the City's Urban Planning Department), no single CoCT department was willing to accept the responsibility for ongoing maintenance, cleaning and security of the building in the long term. In addition, private

sector capacity in an area such as Bonteheuwel is reduced and largely informal, which limits the options for multisectoral financing of precinct management models. Despite the acknowledgement at policy level of the need for the public sector to play a bigger role in guiding and implementing precinct management in township environments such as Bonteheuwel, the MURP remains seemingly under resourced and undercapitalised to be able to deliver on its mandate.

Defining the community's role in the MURP

Two key project management structures are used to ensure inter-departmental coordination and community participation, namely, Area Coordinating Teams (ACTs) and Project Steering Committees (PSC) supported by a reference group.

ACTs meet monthly and comprise of three groups of actors: officials from respective service branches operating in specific areas such as local line managers in housing, cleansing, roads, sewerage, health, libraries, sport and recreation, parks and bathing and so forth; local political leaders elected as councillors as well as representatives of community organisations. According to Williams (2004: 1), ACTs were originally established in 1999 "as a vehicle through which government agencies could engage local communities in development planning". With the prominence of the ABA, ACTs appear to be used by MURP as instruments to encourage and facilitate inter-departmental communication and transversal cooperation "at district level with respect to safety, stabilisation, day to day service delivery and operations and maintenance" (*Status report: Implementation of Mayoral Urban Renegeration Programme (MURP) Projects in Sub Council 5*, 2017: 2).

The primary vehicle for community participation in the MURP is the Project Steering Committee (PSC); this structure is commonly used by local government as an engagement and feedback mechanism of local government planning processes. According to CoCT internal documents, key objectives of the PSC are to foster community ownership of a specific project; to ensure broader participation of the community through representation and regular report-back; and to assist the City with implementation by 'popularising tasks and unblocking blockages' (*Terms of Reference for Steering Committee*, n.d.). Community members to be elected to the PSC must be standing members of a community organisation (CBOs, NPOs or civil society structures), be nominated for election and be elected at a public meeting. Once elected, members become representatives of the sector most in alignment with the work of the organisation they represent and relevant to the programme at hand for a term of two years (examples of relevant sectors are safety and security, institutions, infrastructure or economic

development). Relevant local government administrators and local elected politicians become ex-officio members of the PSC (with no voting rights).

As previously indicated, the primary vehicle for community participation in the MURP is the PSC. However, the review of strategic documents as well as interviews with the MURP team reveal that the notion of community participation was somewhat redefined.

The founding pillar of the CAP strategy was the promotion of an "active and engaged community", which was perceived as the basis to improve safety and development in the area. To achieve this goal, the MURP team had envisaged two key strategies: on the one hand, the team hoped to involve the community in the running of public events, which would "*blow life into the CBD*" and complement environmental interventions such as beautifying the area, improving safety and cleanliness. On the other hand, the MURP team had developed a project-based learning approach to respond to the social development priorities identified by the community, by which teams of community members would be tasked with the identification, design, implementation and evaluation of real-world problems that affect their communities (i.e. event management, horticulture maintenance, waste management, etc.). This active learning and participation approach would be linked to a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) certification process and "*a better resourced form*" of the national Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) with the objective of increasing employability and self-employment opportunities of those that undergo training. The rationale behind this approach is in stark contrast to conventional instrumental planning approaches, which prioritise 'plan and control' type interventions; instead the approach advocates for an organic and incremental focus on small projects away from the 'mega plan'; in the words of the MURP team member: *"we've got to start really small… we've got to activate these communities by getting them involved in micro-projects that can move really quickly [if buy-in is gained from the onset]".* Arguably this approach aims at empowering communities through self-organisation processes.

At the interviews, most government officials interviewed criticized the conventional public and community participation approach often labelling it as a "*box-ticking exercise*". A city official expanded as follows: "*the locus of decision-making must stay with the community; City must stop seeing itself as the deliverers. There are many organisations out there that are ready to do things… but we don't let them do… we must stop controlling processes*". One official directly criticized the PSC structure as a public participation mechanism because "*it doesn't allow anyone to get involved with anything! (i.e. if* [dealing with] *an education project, some people could then volunteer and get involved)".* In her view, the implications of this are far

reaching: "*the lack of opportunities to directly participate in activities becomes a barrier to ownership. Public participation becomes a report back / feedback process*".

Due to programme timeframes and delays previously discussed, the MURP's participation strategy was not culminated prior to the dissolution of the PSC early in 2019, although according to the MURP manager, it will be pursued in future programme iterations in the community. Only one practical example of such project-based community participation materialised during the iteration under study: a career day was organised under the leadership of one PSC member to expose secondary school youth to career information and guidance. The MURP team supported the initiative by mobilising relevant City departments to attend the event; however, the tolerance of the municipality to allow and promote such self-organisation is still arguably low: according to MURP manager, an external project management company was eventually brought on board to manage the organisation of the event and to ensure that funds were properly spent; this move was justified by the official who clarified that "*according to the Municipal Finance Management Act, if monies are seen to be misused, they can go after your house…!*" [implying he would have been personally liable for any programme mis-expenditure]. Although over 1000 youth participated in a successful gathering made possible by dozens of community volunteers, the interviews with PSC members reveal largely an experience of frustration and lack of recognition. This will be further explored in section 5.5.

Conclusion

Voices from and within the state section has discussed the fluid logic and rationale behind the MURP implementation in Bonteheuwel as related by government officials. There is an apparent tension between the MURP team's pursue of exploration and experimentation, as defined by Duit & Galaz (2008) and the structural constraints of the institutions in which it is embedded. Reflections from different government officials are a testimony to the conflicting rationalities at play at the level of institutions, programme teams and individuals. One official interviewed eloquently points to the unbalanced relationship between the explorative and exploitative functions of the state:

"The core problem is the lack of leadership…nobody is steering the ship in any direction. The culture needs to change [from one where the prevalent attitude is] *to do as little as possible because then you don't get into trouble. If the thing is to always be punished for getting things wrong, how is anyone going to do anything?"*

5.4 Conflicting rationalities in MURP: Voices from Bonteheuwel

This section exposes some of the contradicting rationalities found in Bonteheuwel; it provides a replica to the state's view of MURP implementation from the experience of interviewed community members, their values and aspirations. The section mimics the chronological structure of the previous section - voices from and within the state.

Living in Bonteheuwel: Living contradictions

Residents interviewed experience seemingly contradictory emotions towards their community: on the one hand, the scourge of drug abuse, gangsterism and criminality, teenage pregnancy and intra-family violence elicits feelings of anger, frustration and deep sadness. "*Schools are prisons*", explains one of the respondents describing the fence that surrounds the school building within the school's perimeter fence. As a result, sports fields are not used. Mothers in Bonteheuwel "*fear for their children*", who become "*prisoners in their own homes*" for fear of crime and gang-related violence to erupt on their way to school or to the corner shop. On the other hand, most interviewees described their community as one that they can rely on and trust, which endears a deep sense of security and belonging. In the words of one of the respondents: "*amongst the bullets, we feel safe*". Similarly, "*when residents come together for artistic events, the talent that is here is incredible!*" announces passionately another respondent.

Such perplexing statements trigger images of courageous residents resigned to their destiny, or of delusional community members clutching at straws in disintegrating neighbourhoods. It is primarily a testament to the lived complexity that people experience in suburbs such as Bonteheuwel.

Contrasting views emerged from the interviews on the level of organisation in the community. One key informant with experience as a facilitator of community processes across the City indicated that, when compared with other communities, Bonteheuwel appears relatively well-organised: organisations such as the Joint Peace Forum (JPF) and Bonteheuwel Ratepayers and Tenants Association (BRATA) are active and "*solely owned by the community*". However, interviews revealed that party politics play a role in the formation of alliances among community members and that these permeate development discussions and processes. While this study did not manage to explore the nature and impact of those alliances in any level of detail, interviews with both community and local government representatives revealed that there is a level of mistrust of the work of community-based organisations and civic representative bodies, which is often perceived as self-serving along political lines or personal contests for power.

Nevertheless, community mobilisation and activism has a rich history in Bonteheuwel (Staniland, 2011) and has given birth to some prominent anti-apartheid activists, such as Ashley Kriel, Christopher Truter and Coline Williams. Interviews confirmed that this remains 'living history' for numerous community members: those who grew up within the anti-apartheid activism ranks have memories of the sense of unity and purpose that most felt at the time; others have later on taken up positions of prominence within their community as a response to the lack of social change experienced post-democracy.

It was not possible for this study to gather more evidence on these views. However, unpacking the process and mechanisms of community participation in the MURP may shed some light into what intrinsic and extrinsic factors may have influenced the nature of community and local government engagement and, by extension, broader MURP outcomes.

Inception stages: Partnering with the community

This section will discuss how the community participation system used by the MURP did not achieve its purpose of "ensuring broader participation and fostering ownership of the projects by community members" (*Terms of Reference for Steering Committee*, n.d.). Interviews reveal that the implementation of the system was suboptimal, but they also raise questions about the appropriateness of the system in the way that it is conceptualised.

As introduced earlier, the primary vehicle for community participation in the MURP is the Project Steering Committee (PSC). Community members interviewed indicated that the announcement, in 2016, of a public meeting to elect a project steering committee to work with the CoCT for the upliftment of the area, was the first time most had ever heard about the MURP. Even though the programme was not new in Bonteheuwel, MURP was not well known by the neighbours who later became involved. This is even though two of the three respondents had acted as community representatives in City-led initiatives in the past.

As previously indicated, the design and implementation of the PSC as a vehicle for public participation follows the structure of the ward committee system. Esau (2008: 17) found that, despite positive findings along some performance areas (i.e. the system facilitated relations between the community and the City of Cape Town and contributed to increasing levels of social capital by organising community interests along sectors), the effectiveness of the PSC hinged upon "the ability of the local residents, both within sector associations and outside of sector associations, to influence matters affecting their daily lives remained low".

These conditions appear not to have materialised in the case of Bonteheuwel MURP. MURP PSC members interviewed did not understand why the City would insist that only formally structured CBO, NGO or civic organisations could be elected. This was perceived as a barrier for entry and engagement in an environment where, despite high connectivity among residents, informality may be the norm (i.e. business sector); ultimately, the sector representative feedback process was deemed insufficient to meet the real needs of the community, namely, to drive the decision-making process for community regeneration and development. Esau (2008) similarly argued that relying on sectors as a mechanism for inclusive participation is problematic because not all community members are associated with sectors and accountability of the programme is limited to a network of people who are members of boards, forums and associations as opposed to the community as a whole.

Interviews with PSC community members revealed the low credibility of the system: "*we knew some delegates had been hand-picked for the portfolios, so we feared we wouldn't be taken seriously*". Similarly, other respondents displayed scepticism against city-led public participation processes in general, criticising that they are done "*minimalistically, as a box-ticking exercise*".

While the reported anomalies in the election process were not explored in detail, the reports are indicative of the absence of trust in the process on the part of the community and it is closely related to an environment of incendiary local politics. The interviews reveal that political divisions appear to have played a disproportionate role in the workings of the PSC.

Interviews also revealed that community organisations often way up several considerations before engaging with the municipality: one of the community members interviewed recognised that her organisation "*debated intensely whether to take part in the MURP and decided against it".* The respondent felt strongly that there would have been a contradiction between the activist/lobbyist role of the community organisation she is involved with to, on the one hand, demand service delivery and hold government accountable, and on the other hand, participate in one of its structures. An overwhelming sentiment of neglect and exclusion experienced over decades has led some community members in Bonteheuwel to mistrust any City-led initiative wielded in the name of 'development', and instead to choose the side of active and demonstrative resistance. Despite Bonteheuwel's outstanding activist past, not all current activists in the community have been born and bred into that context: others, like one of the respondents who was a member of the PSC, have only recently become "*a community leader and an activist*" and are primarily concerned with the possibility of ever "*disappointing or not doing justice to the community*" that has entrusted them with the collective voice.

The findings of Esau in her research into the effectiveness of the Bonteheuwel Ward Committee soon after it was first introduced emphasised "the non-politization of issues as key contributing factor to the successful functioning of the committee" (Esau, 2008: 15). All interviews with community respondents exuded deep frustration and mistrust in the municipal political leadership. This, coupled with alleged interference by the local councillor as will be shown in subsequent sections, eroded a lot of the ground on which the MURP project was supposed to stand.

Early MURP implementation

While the interviews reveal the different motivations that community members had to participate in the MURP, all PSC members respondents exhibited deep concern for the wellbeing of their community and a personal drive to contribute to positive change (all PSC members interviewed were involved formally or informally with NGOs, CBOs or civic movements in Bonteheuwel). Unfortunately, it appears that the energy and commitment, characteristic of early involvement with a new project, was not harnessed by the first Bonteheuwel MURP team: according to the interviews, PSC members struggled to understand the strategic and administrative processes of the City from the onset, which, coupled with the lack of progress in any clear direction, led to immense frustration. Whilst the PSC guidelines require that each member becomes a representative of a specific portfolio, one respondent spoke about how "*no one could tell her what exactly her portfolio was about*".

Even though a new, more informed and responsive MURP leadership took over in Bonteheuwel six months into the project, respondents said it took over a year to be clear about what they needed to do individually and as a group. Most PSC respondents felt the serving time was too short: "*at the point people have got to the point of …let's work! They need to leave*". Another respondent illustrated her frustration with the following quote: "*before we were elected, there had been a previous PSC… It seems that when you get to certain point, when you can actually achieve something, another committee is elected…".* She describes it as *"a never-ending cycle of ever achieving anything".*

Implementation issues: It's all about communication

At the early stages of the process, PSC members, and community members at large, eagerly participated in the priority setting workshops facilitated by the MURP team. Interviewed PSC members felt that the team was open to listen to the communities' experiences, needs and priorities. Two respondents spoke about instances of mutual learning: "[the official] *introduced me to the concept of apartheid spatial planning*".

However, the subsequent process of collaboration with the MURP team appears to be fraught with challenges.

Frequent instances of misinformation along the process (i.e. around portfolio responsibilities, meeting dates, available budgets, etc.) coupled with the lack of tangible progress left many PSC representatives feeling "*like we were window-dressing, like we were puppets… we didn't have a say…*".

PSC members interviewed complained about the lack of transparency around critical issues such as finances: "*I am a mother and a businessperson, and I know there's nothing you can do without money. I never got an answer about what budget is available*", indicated one of the PSC members interviewed. Respondents said they were informed that the City had decided to redirect MURP funding to alleviate the severe drought experienced by Cape Town in 2018 and accepted the urgency of the need. They appeared not to be clear though about the final pool of funds left.

Matters of finances are always sensitive, especially so in poor economic resource settings like Bonteheuwel, but the lack of transparency about the MURP budget allocated to the community highlights a key issue of power imbalance among the parties. One respondent recalled the process of organising the career's day: "*at the last minute DSD* [Department of Social Development] *came on board and took over! They were so rude to those who worked their butts off, it was so unfair… CoCT officials got paid overtime for coming to the career day on a Saturday, but community members who volunteered didn't even get a day's wage…!* The logic of 'survive and thrive' of the community sits in stark contrast to the governmentality, which is illustrated by the comment of one government official interviewed in reference to the weakness of the precinct management model based on voluntary community participation: "*people can't work for free... people in these communities are generally poor and at some point they will go for a proper job. But the City doesn't want to pay them* [without making them employees] *because…who will manage them?"*

Respondents cited examples of how, poor or no communication on the part of the MURP team and the City as a whole led to misunderstandings, and left PSC members with a sense of failure, as illustrated by one of the respondents: "*I am so sad… I feel we never achieved anything. I felt we were selected as a rubber stamp to the whole process… We invested our time and money and never got anything out of it".* During an interview, one respondent regretted that, MURP being a Mayoral initiative, "*at no time, the Mayor comes to us to say: 'congratulations!' or 'this is my mandate for you'…*". Instead, all PSC members interviewed spoke about the meddling of the local councillor, which seemed demeaning, offensive and

self-serving. One respondent was clear about the councillor's actual role within the MURP: "*he was part of the buy-in equation, not the decision-making equation!*" All community members interviewed spoke with disdain about political figures in the City, which represent the current governance model, one that, in the words of Swilling, Simone & Khan (2003: 239), has become "pure style (majestic displays of authority and pomp)".

Despite this, most PSC members consulted appeared to draw a line of distinction between political figures and the MURP administrative team. PSC members' discourses showed 'empathy' for programme officials, who despite their shown commitment to bringing about change in the community were pushed "*against the wall*" by the agenda of local politicians as well as the municipal bureaucracy.

One respondent advocated for increased feedback: "*report back to the sectors should be done every three months; it should be well publicised, and it should happen whether you have something to report on* [an achievement or a tangible change] *or not!"* This respondent called for administrators and decision-makers also to share their frustration about the lack of progress with communities. According to him, it is important to show communities that they must pressure their political leaders; it is also critical for the administration to see the frustration experienced by communities on the slow pace of development.

The suggestions from this respondent point to a critical community claim to governmentality: a demand for respect. By increasing communication and honest feedback to community representatives, community members feel valued and respected, which is an important pillar for relationship building and collaboration.

5.5 Summary of findings

Chapter 5 has discussed the findings of the research carried out on the MURP Bonteheuwel case study. Specifically, the chapter was structured to address two of the three research objectives, namely: 1) to assess the degree to which Bonteheuwel is a complex adaptive system; and, 2) to apply the 'conflicting rationalities' lens to the study of planning interventions in the Global South. This sub-section presents a summary of the findings in response to the research questions.

Bonteheuwel displays all the key characteristics of a complex adaptive system

Planners and other development practitioners are often confronted with the reality of non-linear, unpredictable and constantly adapting problems to prediction and control that do not respond well to solutions born out of analysis of the individual parts.

Applying the lens of complexity to the description of planning settings, such as Bonteheuwel, offers new opportunities to understand the diverse logics, multiple trajectories and possible futures that exist. Bonteheuwel is more than the aggregation of results of any household survey undertaken by government at any one point. It is a hub of networks and connections, along lines such as civic structures, religious affiliation and goodwill initiatives, which provide a potential source of social capital as well as contestation and contradiction; it is a distinct place that has evolved in direct relation to the socio-political conditions of the regional and national context it is embedded in; the history of resistance and activism in Bonteheuwel is testament to the influence of a vivid memory, which manifests as a strong adaptive capacity that the system deploys selectively to reinvent itself when in need.

By recognising the characteristics of a CAS, which are prevalent in our societies, planners are better equipped to begin to engage in processes of governance and transformation. Complexity brings the promise of deeper understanding, leveraging of existing capacities, mutual adaptation and learning and, ultimately, more sustainable strategies for managing change. Chapter 6.3 will discuss some of the practical implications of complexity approaches to urban regeneration in cities of the Global South.

The conflicting rationalities concept is applicable to the MURP Bonteheuwel case study

The concept of conflicting rationalities brings the following proposition: that planners in the Global South consider their roles in relation to an ongoing conflict of rationalities between the state and the market on the one hand, and poor communities attempting to survive and thrive on the other (de Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Chapter 5.4, ‘Voices from and within the state’, revealed the plurality of motives and mandates that guide government-led developmental projects, often in divergent directions. The case foregrounded the struggle of individual planning practitioners who backed a non-conventional form of community participation but were pulled back by the bureaucratic machinery of the state, localised battles for power and illusory expectations of the community as the counterpart in development.

The research on the MURP Bonteheuwel case study endorses the validity and relevance of the conflicting rationalities concept and illustrates the existence of normative and power

struggles within both parties. These put into question the applicability of dominant deliberative planning approaches that presume collaboration and consensus as a direct output to participatory processes. The case has surfaced a plurality of wills to govern and improve, which leads to contradictions, inconsistencies, impasses and frustration in the implementation of the regeneration project. Similarly, community members in Bonteheuwel perform diverse practices to survive and thrive, which do not always align with predetermined conceptions of 'development' or 'community'.

Having addressed research sub-objectives 1) and 2), Chapter 6 concludes this thesis by responding to sub-objective 3), namely, discussing the characteristics of a complexity-based approach to urban regeneration in the Global South.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In this section, I draw conclusions from the findings of my case study which has aimed at contributing to the body of planning theory and practice rooted in the reality of Cape Town, a city in the Global South. Specifically, this thesis had the following research sub-objectives:

1) To demonstrate how Bonteheuwel can be understood as a complex adaptive system;
2) To apply the 'conflicting rationalities' lens to the study of planning interventions in the Global South, such as the MURP in Bonteheuwel, Cape Town;
3) To explore the characteristics of a complexity-based governance approach to urban regeneration in the Global South.

The Cape Town community of Bonteheuwel embodies many of the socio-economic challenges which people experience in post-apartheid South Africa. The scar of forced removals together with the spatial disenfranchisement and restricted mobility determined by the physical configuration of the suburbs have enabled economic exclusion, social fracture, criminality and gangsterism to flourish.

While addressing the spatial legacy of apartheid has been at the forefront of the policy arena of a nascent developmental state, policy coherence and inter-governmental cooperation remain work in progress. This is the policy and administrative environment in which urban regeneration programmes like the MURP operate.

The MURP Bonteheuwel case study provides an example of the practical complexities that urban regeneration projects entail. The field research has shown that the 'govern and improve' mentality of the state represents anything but a unified and coherent voice of planning policy and practice; instead, the position of the 'state' is more akin to a mosaic of motivations, expectations, political battles, pull-and-push processes that reveal the contesting dynamics of planning and governance efforts of the developmental state.

Complexity theory has also offered some insights into the interpretation of the events that unfolded as part of the MURP Bonteheuwel 2017-2019 iteration. If we view Bonteheuwel as a CAS, it is impossible to ignore the role that memory plays in the collective imagination of many community residents and organisations and how it may impact current patterns of behaviour and relationship. As argued by Poli, 2009 & Woermann (2016) in Preiser & Woermann (2019: 2), "past events and configurations codetermine the present, and the system's present state

codetermines future system configurations". Bonteheuwel's recent past of forced removals, coupled with inadequate service delivery in the post-apartheid era, has meant that the community is weary of government interventions that appear to come with a pre-set agenda and do not clearly respond to community demands.

6.2 On the convergence between complexity and conflicting rationalities

There is an emerging body of knowledge exploring the implications of complexity theory with regard to the study and practice of planning. For some authors (Huys & van Gils, 2010), complexity principles reinforce the relevance and appropriateness of deliberative planning theories; for others (Grunau & Schoenwandt, 2010), they point to the shortcomings of deliberative planning with its focus on the 'how', the process of communication and decision-making - often viewing the planner as a mere facilitator - but taking away the focus from the 'what', from the spatial processes and outcomes. Indeed, the literature review for this thesis has shown that complexity and collaborative planning theories converge in emphasising the benefits of diversity, participation, different forms of knowledge - 'the value of the street-level expert' according to Wagenaar (2007) and Strand (2007) - and the potential for mutual learning of the planning process.

It can be argued, however, that the MURP Bonteheuwel case study viewed from a conflicting rationalities lens questions the blanket applicability of deliberative planning processes to any and every context, especially urban settings in the Global South. The concept compels the planner to engage in a deep-dive investigation of the dynamics of contestation over power and resources that characterise cities in the Global South. Only when the collective memories, the values, the aspirations, the alliances and the struggles of the urban marginalised and poor are better understood, will the planner be in the position to foster collaborative approaches to decision-making and implementation. In other words, the mere exchange of supposedly 'value-free' knowledge and information among a diverse set of agents involved in participatory processes will not necessarily lead to group adaptation and co-evolution. According to de Satgé & Watson (2018), the divide between planning practitioners and poor communities in the Global South not only advocates conventional exercises of public participation and engagement to fail, but it arguably contributes to erode the foundations of trust and social capital on which collective action is built (Preiser & Woermann, 2019).

The call for a 'realist perspective' in the language of complexity, or 'pragmatic deal-making' as postulated by the conflicting rationalities concept, is grounded in the presumption of chaos,

non-linearity constant change and unpredictability of agents performing different, often contradictory, functions within a complex-adaptive system, such as Bonteheuwel. Both theories demand that practitioners confront the normative implications of action and/or inaction for the diverse sub-systems, which will shape patterns of behaviour and responses to the environment.

6.3 Implications for planning and governance in the Global South

If we recognise a community like Bonteheuwel as a complex-adaptive system, the question then begs: what is the most appropriate approach to engaging and intervening in such a CAS? In the context of our case study, the question becomes more specific: what would a complexity-based governance approach to urban regeneration in the Global South look like?

This is what complexity theorists call *adaptive management,* which is considered a more realistic and promising approach to deal with complex-adaptive systems than management for effectiveness and optimal use.

Emerging southern urbanists and complexity theorists involved with the study of public governance concur in advocating for a move towards *grounded* but *bold* governance theory and practice, one whose departure point is the engagement with what Grunau and Schoenwandt define as “society’s big messes” (Grunau & Schoenwandt, 2010: 5). For example, because mainstream planning theory traditionally assumes the existence of a homogenous community, it silences the practices of politics and power and it presumes consensus. Adaptive management requires that planners and other public officials embrace ‘the mess’ by rooting their practice in a conscious attempt to look out and understand the “competing and contingent spaces of power” (de Satgé & Watson, 2018: 228). Furthermore, Grunau and Schoenwandt caution that failure to foreground society’s *big messes* risks leading to “mindless and useless actions that needlessly consume resources without actually solving the problem at hand” (Grunau & Schoenwandt, 2010: 50).

At the beginning stages of engaging with a CAS, adaptive governance requires a shift in terms of what should be considered during framing and analysis, from focusing on the characteristics of parts of the system to considering the system properties. Current planning approaches predominantly base interventions on the aggregation of results emanating from household surveys. Complexity theory recommends the use of tools that allow for the identification of diversity, self-organisational patterns and relational processes that generate system behaviour, such as social network analysis. Similarly, the conflicting rationalities concept compels the planner to conduct a deep historical investigation of the community in which it is

meant to work, identifying the system and sub-systems typically present in urban communities in the Global South. In the case of Bonteheuwel, a formal investigation of the networks and alliances present in the community could have shed light on the level of organisation and diversity as well as the degree to which a representative body is truly inclusive of the various sectors.

It is widely recognised that *trust* is a critical foundation for collaboration and collective action (Biggs *et al.*, 2015; Esau, 2008; Shannon, 1990 in Folke *et al.*, 2005). However, building trust in the context of system diversity and tight interconnection is no easy task because stakeholders often have different understandings of how the world operates, which are built on opposed principles (i.e. objectivism versus constructivism approaches). Trust is also built with time, continuous engagement and feedback. While on most accounts, the MURP implementing team showed commitment to the regeneration project by being present in the community regularly, the task of building trust and a shared vision arguably required a longer timeframe and facilitation by an independent agent exempt of the taint carried by government. Complexity theorists such as (Biggs *et al.*, 2015; Preiser & Woermann, 2019; Strand, 2007)) highlight the importance of facilitators and 'bridging organisations' that are skilled at building common understanding and trust between local actors, communities and organisations on other scales (i.e. government, corporations, etc.). "By reducing the (nonmonetary) transaction costs of collaboration, bridging organizations can be described as providing social incentives to stakeholders to invest in building trust, identification of common interests, and resolving conflict" (Folke *et al.*, 2005: 22). The MURP Bonteheuwel case study clearly revealed that the MURP implementing team was tainted by past performance and association with local politics in the eyes of PSC members. While the MURP broadly follows the principles and approach of the VPUU, it lost the independence and impartiality that VPUU had enjoyed in the past, which was exemplified by their inability to shelter the project from political interference.

Another critical practice in adaptive governance is the role of *feedback* in stimulating or inhibiting system behaviour. The rich and tight interactions present in a CAS mean that "any element influences, and is influenced by quite a few other ones" (Cilliers, 1998 in Preiser & Woermann (2019: 5). In our case study, several events may have acted as inhibiting feedback loops contrary to the strengthening of the MURP team – PSC relationship. Many respondents criticised the MURP for following a compliance culture of public participation and community engagement, in which government agencies traditionally develop the agenda first, present it to the different groups, and incorporate these groups in already established frameworks. This leads to complex social dynamics, such as trust building and power relations being underestimated, and social relationships simplified (Folke *et al.*, 2005). In contrast, adaptive

governance advocates for the devolution of decision-making power that builds on system capacities and promotes self-organisation, while maintaining connectivity and interaction using multiple communication platforms. In the planning context, this devolution of power can be found in the exercise of *co-production,* which in practice manifests as a continuum of state and society forms of engagement, which experiment with forms of service delivery, where beneficiary communities play an important role in the analysis, planning, implementation and management of the actual delivery (Watson, 2014b). Bottom-up forms of co-production attempt to "shift the norms of democratic practice and power, to create an alternative form of governmentality" (Watson, 2014b: 11). In the case of MURP Bonteheuwel it is clear that the locus of power and decision-making rested with the CoCT at all times, despite some attempts at involving communities in priority setting and direct service delivery via active engagement and participation. Because the PSC did not have access to project budgets, their role was merely subsidiary in a consultative capacity. The lack of transparency around project progress, barriers and enablers, as well as the excessive reliance on the PSC for selective communication, added to the sense of frustration and disempowerment of community members, who felt like they did not have a say. In situations of antagonism and conflict, public officials tend to hide behind the rules; however, Wagenaar (2007: 38) argues that it is in those situations, when "informal routes of communication tend to be more effective, both instrumentally and by creating a climate of trust and collaboration".

Devolution of power is intended to foster self-organisation as a fundamental characteristic of adaptive management. Self-organisation encourages system agents to harness their connections and capacities to adapt their pattern of behaviour to the changing context. In poor urban communities of the Global South, such as Bonteheuwel, competing priorities and power struggles have eroded parts of the social capital fibre, which is a pre-requisite for self-organisation to prosper. In such environments, adaptive management interventions should provide the 'scaffolding' necessary for self-organisation to emerge. VPUU's social development fund was arguably one of such initiatives, which enabled decentralised and self-directed community projects to operate.

A key feature of adaptive management is 'learning by doing', taking risks and experimenting. For Strand (2007: 7) "the foundation for adaptive management is when policies become hypothesis and management actions become experiments to test those hypotheses". Progressing in the desired direction will therefore strongly depend on the capacity of the system to learn and adapt; hence the significance of monitoring and evaluation of different actions and results (Biggs *et al.*, 2015; Duit & Galaz, 2008; Strand, 2007). The MURP Bonteheuwel case study illustrates, however, how an adaptive management approach will

likely be quenched in the absence of a conducive governance system. Case study interviews revealed how the municipality does not promote a culture of innovation and testing; instead, respondents indicated that the system is punitive of risk-taking approaches. Practicing adaptive management requires an environment where “institutions are able to navigate processes of adaptation and surprise” (Preiser & Woermann, 2019: 2).

6.4 Recommendations for future research

The pursuit of this thesis responded to the lack of literature on planning and complexity in the Global South. Specifically, the research design was selected to contribute to the *practice movement*, the body of knowledge which focuses on the documentation and analysis of activities of individual planners, their products, their interactions and their impacts (Watson, 2002). The learnings brought about by the MURP Bonteheuwel case study point to additional gaps in the literature, which should be prioritised to advance planning theory and practice in cities in the Global South.

In the intersection between complexity theory and the conflicting rationalities concept is the acknowledgement of complex adaptive systems as unpredictable, messy and non-linear. This is particularly the case in urban communities in the Global South, which often bear the consequences of rapid urbanisation, inequality, poverty and under capacitated states. To equip planning practitioners with the understanding and tools to be able to engage in such contexts, the planning field would benefit from the documentation of case studies that dare to foreground the dynamics of contestation and conflict; case studies that focus the analysis on the processes used by the planner to further his/her understanding of the conflict/s involved; the mechanisms by which common ground was progressively built and explain the trade-offs required. Such a ‘realist’ planning account would assist in challenging long-held assumptions about the planning practice and repositioning the emphasis on the realities of values, power and conflict.

In addition, the applicability of the conflicting rationalities concept must be tested against poor urban contexts where informality is not necessarily the norm. Arguably, the contesting logics of governmentality and informality illustrate the conflicting rationalities concept in its purest form. However, more research is needed to understand how the concept manifests in environments where clashes continue to occur once the formality of infrastructure and practices is in place.

Complexity theory suggests a completely new approach to the study and engagement with CAS. Additional research is required to illustrate the applicability and practical implications of

such methods in city planning, specially methods and approaches that would aim at establishing the nature of networks and relationships in poor community settings in the Global South, where survivalist strategies dictate complex and intricate alliances that respond to informal channels of organisation.

Lastly, while the development studies field has preoccupied itself with alternative forms of state – society engagement, this exploration has not fully permeated the planning field. Specifically, there is an opportunity to research alternative forms of public participation and engagement from the lens of complexity and recognising urban societies in the Global South as complex-adaptive systems.

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Appendix A. Interview guideline: Government official

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Enabling complexity thinking in urban regeneration in Cape Town

[Researcher to make sure that information sheet is explained to the interviewee and consent is obtained before commencing the interview]

Stakeholder interviewed:

Affiliation:

Date of the interview:

On MURP and urban planning, policy and practice

1. What is the history of MURP? [origins, context, purpose, scope, mandate]
2. Who designed MURP? Who implements it? Who funds it? Who oversees it?
3. How does MURP fit into wider policy in *urban planning*? How does MURP fit into wider policy in *socio-economic development*?
4. Does MURP follow a set process and approach in each community? How is community engagement conceived and approached by MURP? Does the process vary across communities? Please, describe this process
5. Interactions with other organs of the state: What other programmes/departments can influence the outcomes of the MURP? Over which departments/programmes can the MURP have a positive/negative influence?
6. In your opinion, what is MURPs track record in achieving the objectives it set out to achieve? Please, provide examples and qualify your answer
7. What has contributed to the successful implementation of the programme (enablers)? What has hampered the successful implementation of the programme (barriers)?
8. Refer to examples of challenging planning practice (conflict, lack of trust, confrontation, power dynamics, etc.) and how they have been handling them

On Bonteheuwel

1. What is the history of MURP in Bonteheuwel? [origins, context, purpose, scope, mandate]
2. To what extent is Bonteheuwel dependent on Cape Town/WC/SA to change its condition? Please, elaborate.
3. Is the community organised in any way? If so, how
4. What is the relationship like between Bonteheuwel community and MURP? To what degree is the community of Bonteheuwel engaged/committed with MURP??
5. In your opinion, what has MURP achieved in Bonteheuwel thus far? Please, provide examples and qualify your answer
6. What has contributed to the successful implementation of the programme (enablers)? What has hampered the successful implementation of the programme (barriers)?

Into the future

1. Tell me about the best times you have had in your work in the past five years. Looking at your entire experience, recall a time when you felt most alive, most involved, or most excited about your involvement – a highlight moment.
    - What was the situation?
    - Who was involved?
    - What happened?
    - What was the experience like for the client group and for yourself?
2. Values: what are the things you value deeply about your work? What is it that, if it did not exist, would make your work totally different than it currently is?
3. Imagine it is five years into the future and Bonteheuwel is just as you would want it to be. What's happening that makes it vibrant and successful? What has changed? What has stayed the same, and how have you contributed to this future?
4. What steps are needed today, to reach that vision? What *three things* should the MURP together with community members should do to that place?

Appendix B. Interview guideline: Community member

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Enabling complexity thinking in urban regeneration in Cape Town

[Researcher to make sure that information sheet is explained to the interviewee and consent is obtained before commencing the interview]

Stakeholder interviewed:

Affiliation:

Date of the interview:

Overview of interview

- Establish personal relationship to Bonteheuwel (personal and/or professional)
- Establish personal relationship to local government and/or MURP
- Enquire about community values / mobilisation / activism / resources and organisation

On history and life in Bonteheuwel

1. **How long has your family lived in Bonteheuwel? Why did your family choose Bonteheuwel?**
2. What is it like in Bonteheuwel as a young man / woman / older person?
3. What are the things you enjoy about your community?
4. What are the things you are proud of in your community?
5. What are the things you don't enjoy about Bonteheuwel?

On MURP / local government in Bonteheuwel

6. What is the history of MURP in Bonteheuwel? [origins, context, purpose, scope, mandate]
7. What role does the community play in the MURP, if any?
8. What is the relationship like between Bonteheuwel community and MURP? To what degree is the community of Bonteheuwel engaged/committed with MURP?
9. In your opinion, what has MURP achieved in Bonteheuwel thus far? Please, provide examples and qualify your answer

Into the future

10. Imagine it is five years into the future and Bonteheuwel is just as you would want it to be. What's happening that makes it vibrant and successful? What has changed? What has stayed the same, and how have you contributed to this future?
11. What steps are needed today, to reach that vision? What *three things* should the MURP together with community members should do to that place?

Appendix C. Participant observation protocol: MURP meetings

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Enabling complexity thinking in urban regeneration in Cape Town

Introduction

This protocol will guide the researcher in carrying out participant observation for the completion of her master's thesis titled: *Enabling complexity thinking in urban regeneration in Cape Town.*

Methodology

It is expected that the researcher will take part in two types of meetings: 1) MURP planning meetings among government officials and/or partners (academia, civil society or business community); 2) MURP consultation, planning and feedback meetings with community members of Bonteheuwel. MURP planning meetings are likely to take place at local government offices at a time arranged by the MURP team. MURP meetings with community members are likely to take place at a designated community venue (i.e. school hall) in Bonteheuwel.

In both settings, the researcher will briefly introduce herself and the purpose of her research at the beginning of the meeting. Data will be gathered in the form of written notes on issues such as:

a. What issues are identified? How are issues discussed and addressed?
b. What is the nature of the relationships among different participants and entities as emerged in the meeting?
c. To what extent are systemic issues (issues not specific to Bonteheuwel) considered and how are they addressed?
d. How are decisions made?
e. Whose perspectives, issues and priorities are considered for decision making?

Potential harms

I do not anticipate that participants will experience any harm as a result of the researcher's presence in the meeting.

Privacy and confidentiality

The researcher will not quote or name any meeting participant in her research; data will be aggregated, and the confidentiality of participants will be respected. Should the researcher be interested in quoting a specific individual, consent will be sought on an individual basis.